An Investigation of the National Self through the Concepts of Subjectivity and Discourse

A study of Welsh-Language Learners in Wales

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Abstract

This thesis argues that "national subjectivity" is a valuable concept which can provide a more nuanced and comprehensive conceptual understanding of national identity than is currently available. Using notions of discourse and subjectivity developed by Michel Foucault and the Essex School of Discourse Theory, and taking Wales as a case-study, it advances a theoretical framework for exploring and bringing new insights to the national self and the role of the nation in people's daily lives. The theoretical framework puts forth an understanding of the national self that investigates the discursive production of the individual as a national subject, the nature of national subjectivity, and the ethical implications of national subjectivities, such that a national subjectivity confers ethical schemata which shape the conduct, values, choices and other aspects of the individual's day-to-day life. Using interview data collected through field work carried out with Welsh language learners in three regions within Wales, this thesis empirically examines the insights that this theoretical framework can contribute to the understanding of the national self, and its complex, fluid, self-constructed, creatively negotiated, and impactful nature.

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Contents

Introduction

National identity is as important an aspect of social and political life as ever. Its foretold decline due to globalization and the emergence of newer post-national identities has not come to pass (Edensor, 2006: 27-29; Thompson, 1999: 234). While new avenues of identification have certainly opened up, and technological and social developments have enabled people to belong to new global and local communities, the nation as a constituent part of everyday life has not diminished. It remains a powerful category or frame through which people make sense of their social existence, such that the national self is still an integral part of the makeup of the individuals' self-identity.

Indeed recent developments across the globe have highlighted the continuing salience of the nation, nationalism, and national identity. Movements for independence in sub-state nations such as Scotland and Catalonia have demonstrated the potential and actual power of nationalism and national identity to significantly shape contemporary politics and society. More problematically, the 'new nationalism' of the past few years has seen 'great and rising powers … simultaneously in thrall to various sorts of chauvinism', wherein populist nationalisms have taken aim at the international order, and have embraced 'a pessimistic view that foreign affairs are often a zero-sum game in which global interests compete with national ones' (The Economist, 2016). The nation and certain forms of nationalism have been re-centred through a number of political movements that have profoundly shaped today's political and social landscape. The referendum on UK membership in the EU, for example, mobilised English national identity, and Brexit was fuelled by an English nationalism (Henderson et al., 2017: 632; O'Toole, 2016, Calhoun, 2017: 72). Trump's election was similarly driven by a populist appeals to national identity. The rhetoric of xenophobia and racism (Bhambra, 2017), combined with economic nationalism and protectionism under the banner of "America First," and political isolationism, shifted the political landscape in the United States. This movement parallels developments in many European countries that have witnessed a resurgence of an anti-EU, anti-migrant far-right (Rachman, 2018).

On a more everyday level, the nation today is as flagged and encountered as ever. People encounter their nation in a variety of different ways, through both overt displays of nationalism and national ceremony, and through mundane and everyday reminders of the nation's existence. The nation is encountered quite overtly in ritualistic events, from sporting occasions to national days of celebration and remembrance. These explicit expressions of the nation punctuate more mundane and unnoticed manifestations of the nation in daily life. A 'banal nationalism' sustains national identities through subtle, routine and everyday reproductions of the nation (Billig, 2014). Subtle daily reminders of the nation are ever-present in people's environment; they are encountered on television, in newspapers and in advertisements. Flags and national symbols are found everywhere from food packaging to number plates and car stickers.

It is not simply the relevance of the nation to modern life that makes the nation and people's relationship to it an interesting and necessary topic of study. The national self is also complex. No nation has an uncontested national story[1]. No nation will have its denizens in agreement as to what it means to be a national of that place. Nations and national identities change over time in relation to social, cultural and political events, which means that people's national selves are less decided and complete than they are taken to be. Furthermore, the notion of a national identity presents an image of a coherent and stable self which masks the shifting, contextual and multiple nature of national self-understanding (Hall, 1992: 598). New investigations into this subject can potentially shed light on, and contribute a greater understanding of this complicated and dynamic phenomenon of being a subject of a nation. Some research has been carried out into this topic, but more work is needed. It is vitally important that what is referred to as national identity, this "national" part of social existence, is more fully understood. This thesis takes the position that the concept of "national identity" is an insufficient concept for understanding the

[1] A number of authors have written about the competition and contestation between multiple understandings of the nation (Smith, 2009: 33), different narratives of national identity and history (Kulyk, 2010), or the 'idea that individuals within a nation do not share the same image of that nation's common characteristics' (Korostelina, 2013: 25).

complexities and nuances of how individuals become national subjects. It will argue that a theoretical framework based on the concepts of subjectivity and discourse are better suited to providing an understanding of the complex nature of the national self and the national subject.

Outlining the Project

The central research question of the thesis is:

- What insights can the concepts of subjectivity and discourse provide to the study of the national self?

In order to answer this question, the thesis will tackle a number of research sub-questions which follow on from the above:

- To what extent can the concepts of subjectivity and discourse provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the national self than "national identity"?
- What insights can a subjectivity-discourse approach provide into how the national self is formed, maintained, lived and experienced?
- To what extent can the subjectivity-discourse approach uncover the ethical and normative dimensions and implications of the national self?

In order to answer the central research question and its follow-on research questions, the thesis will conduct a theoretical and empirical exploration of the *national self*; that is, the aspect of social life that is shaped, articulated and experienced in relation to "the national." Its focus is on investigating what is referred to as national identity, but what is better characterised as a whole series of processes and operations through which the individual develops a national self. Thus taking the position that "identity" is an insufficient and problematic concept, the thesis will argue that a theoretical

framework based on concepts of subjectivity and discourse provides a more appropriate approach to understanding of the complex nature of the national self.

The thesis will construct a theoretical framework drawing on the work of Michel Foucault and the Essex School of Discourse Theory[2] which will investigate and develop the concept of *national subjectivity*. The thesis is therefore driven by two considerations. Firstly, it is driven partly in response to a problem in how "national identity" is conceptualised and studied. Secondly, it has been shaped by the exciting possibilities of using certain theoretical approaches in the conceptualisation and examination of the national self. Ultimately, then, this thesis argues that national subjectivity, or an understanding of the national self which draws upon notions of subjectivity and discourse, provides an innovative, nuanced and comprehensive conceptualisation of the national self, and theoretically and conceptually improves upon the notion of "national identity."

The thesis will demonstrate the value of such an approach through applying the theoretical framework it develops to a case study – the Welsh nation – so as to exemplify the insights that such an approach and conceptual understanding can provide into the national self. The empirical parts of the thesis will explore, through an analysis of interview data collected with Welsh language learners, how the theoretical framework it develops can bring to light and explain the nuances and complexities of the national self. The thesis, therefore, makes a theoretical and empirical contribution to the study of the nation and national identity; it develops a theoretical and conceptual understanding of the national self using a subjectivity-discourse approach, and through applying this framework to the case study of Wales, it empirically demonstrates how it can explain, uncover and provide new insights into the nature of the national self.

[2] This includes a number of authors that have contributed to, or interacted with the school of Discourse Theory, principally Ernesto Lalcau and Chantal Mouffe, but also Jacob Torfing, David Howarth, Slavoj Žižek, Glenn Bowman, Renata Salecl, and Claire Sutherland.

National "Identity"

In relation to the first research sub-question, the thesis is concerned with the problematic and vague nature of the concept of national identity. It draws on, critiques and reviews literature on the nation, nationalism and national identity, and through engagement with this literature, demonstrates the problem that it is concerned with addressing. The theoretical study of national identity generally suffers due to the vagueness of the concept of identity, and the difficulty of theoretically and methodologically "getting at" this concept. A number of authors have taken issue with the breadth, ambiguity and imprecision of "identity" and national "identity," and have argued that the lack of conceptual clarity of this term means that it 'explains less than it appears to' (Billig, 2014: 60; Malešević, 2006: 35). Critics of national identity as a concept have argued that it refers to a number of processes or elements which come under this vague umbrella term (Billig, 2014: 60; Malešević, 2006: 36).

Indeed the most successful studies of "national identity" have selected certain limited aspects, processes or operations that this term encompasses, and have analysed them through the use of methods and approaches that enable these particular aspects to be effectively studied. Some of the studies which will be reviewed in the next chapter sidestep the pitfalls of identity through uncritically ignoring its problematic implications or connotations. A number of studies have fared better by limiting the processes or operations of identity to which they refer, and by articulating their limited notion of national identity in line with broadly postmodern[3] notions of the subject and national "identity," so as to attempt to overcome the problematic conceptualisation of national identity as essential, fixed and homogenous. Thus some authors have challenged the notion of identity as a coherent and latent self; they have argued that national identities are reiterated and processual, that they are constructed and socially contingent, and that national identity and the nation are

[3] "Postmodern" is a contested term, but invoking Lyotard's (1984) understanding of this term, it is used here to represent a condition or an approach to truth, knowledge and the subject which breaks from certain Enlightenment and modernist modes of thinking, and their attachment to "knowable" truth, objectivity, reason, and the notion of a stable, coherent and fixed identity (Hall, 1992: 611).

products of discursive or ideological structures and processes (Hall, 1992: 598; McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 42; Wodak et al., 2009; Edensor, 2002, 20; Malešević, 2006: 5; Bhabha, 1994). However, the centrality of "identity" in much of this work ties them to a problematic notion with essentialised connotations, and reinforces the hegemony of "national identity" in academic discourse.

In coming to comprehensively understand how individuals become national subjects, the notion of "identity" needs to be carefully situated within a theoretical framework which centres on the processes, operations and elements of the national self. While not discarded entirely, the notion of "national identity" needs to be limited in favour of more nuanced and specific conceptual tools which can uncover, examine and explain the shifting, fleeting and "unfixed" nature of the national self. This thesis will therefore relegate "national identity" in favour of a conceptualisation of the national self as a *national subjectivity*.

Insights into the National Self

The second and third research sub-questions are concerned with exploring the insights that can be made into the nature of the national self. They look into two key interrelated aspects of the national self that the subjectivity-discourse approach illuminates and theorises: firstly, the formation of national subjectivity and the nature of its existence, and secondly, its particular ethical and normative dimension. Driven by the exciting possibilities of employing certain notions of subjectivity and discourse in the analysis of the national self, these two aspects represent underexplored areas that, when analysed, can deliver a more comprehensive understanding of "national" existence.

Firstly, it will be argued that, using the subjectivity-discourse approach, greater insights can be made into the *formation* of the national subject and the *nature* of this subjectivity. It will be argued that the concepts of subjectivity and discourse used enable a much deeper, more nuanced and comprehensive account of how the individual relates to discourses of the nation, how they come to constitute and

understand their national context, how they form themselves as national subjects, exercise agency in this formation, and how national subjectivity is experienced. Therefore, in answering the second research sub-question (what insights can a subjectivity-discourse approach provide into how the national self is formed, maintained, lived and experienced?), the theoretical framework will contribute a greater and more nuanced theoretical understanding of the *formation and nature of the national subject*.

Secondly, it will be argued that the subjectivity-discourse approach enables an investigation of the ethical and normative dimensions of national subjectivities. The second key aspect explored, in answer to the final research sub-question (to what extent can the subjectivity-discourse approach uncover the ethical and normative dimensions and implications of the national self?), is an examination of the normative and ethical dimensions and implications of the national subject, again using the theoretical framework to analyse and explain this aspect of the national self. This is an important dimension of the national self because the framework will posit that discourse is inherently ethical and normative, in the sense that discursive meaning is not neutral, and confers schemata which structure the individual's ethical relationship with their social context. In other words, discourse shapes how an individual understands how the world 'is', and how it 'ought' to be (Townshend, 2004: 277). But the articulation of how the world 'is' is shaped by contingent power relations that delimit the normal and the taken for granted (Taylor, 2009: 52). Normative statements as to how the world 'is' perpetuate and legitimize the power relations that establish such norms, and reproduce the moral and ethical standards and positions that such norms confer.

Discourse, therefore, confers ethical schemata and normative frameworks which structure how the individual interprets, assesses, evaluates, categorises and articulates the social world around them. Individuals, in navigating national subjectivities, are also navigating and actively negotiating with ethical and normative frameworks. Once again, through a detailed analysis of empirical data from the national case study, the extent to which national subjectivities can be said to have normative and ethical dimensions will be explored. Overall, then, by using the

subjectivity-discourse framework to investigate the nuances, complexities and processes of the national self that it uncovers, the thesis will demonstrate both the insights that such an approach can provide into the national self, and the superiority of such a conceptualisation of the national self over "national identity."

Empirical Investigation

In order to test the value of the subjectivity-discourse framework, its assumptions and claims are applied to data collected through interview-based research. An empirical investigation of people's national selves enables the conceptual and theoretical contributions of this thesis to be applied to data relating to people's relationship with, and experiences of the nation. It is through an empirical investigation that the insights the subjectivity-discourse approach enables into the national self can be demonstrated. A singular case-study approach was chosen, as a detailed and in-depth analysis of one national context is most suitable for a discourse-based investigation. An analysis of discourse requires considerable knowledge of the political and social context (Hansen & Sørensen, 2005: 114), therefore the use of a singular case was preferred to a comparative or multi-case study approach as the more focused examination can provide a greater degree of depth into the context. The case study chosen for empirical investigation was the nation of Wales; a sub-state nation within the United Kingdom. The choice of case study was driven by a number of factors.

Firstly, while the theoretical framework developed in this thesis is potentially generalizable to a range of national contexts, from nation-states to sub-state nations, a sub-state nation offers a particularly complex and rich context in which national identification occurs. People in a sub-state nation have multiple national constructs with which they negotiate in their construction of their national self-understanding. In Wales, there are (at least) two 'fused, shared or competing' national identities to consider: Welsh and British (Davies, 2006: 18). While people in nation-states can negotiate with multiple national "identities" as well as regional and local identities, in

a sub-state nation such as Wales the multiple national identities and nationalisms that people interact with are an integral part of the nature of national subjectivities within it. As Davies writes, 'understanding the politics of national identity in Wales cannot be reduced to an analysis of Welsh nationalism and national identity, but must also include an analysis of British nationalism and identity' (2006). The negotiation by the people of Wales with these two national identities therefore provides a rich context for the investigation of how national subjectivities are formed and lived in a multi-national and multi-level context. As people in Wales can have multiple national identities, this plurality adds layers of complexity to the national identities and nationalisms experienced by its denizens. Therefore, having a sub-state nation as a case study means potentially encountering a particularly multifaceted and complex national environment that can enhance the richness of the collected data.

Secondly, Wales was chosen as a case study because the Welsh language offers a valuable object for analysis in the study of national subjectivities in Wales. The significance of language in the formation and existence of nations is well-established in the academic literature[4]. Thus while numerous sub-state nations exist, the Welsh language enables the empirical investigation to focus on a particular feature of the nation, and how this significant element of the nation is negotiated with by the research participants in the formation and articulation of national subjectivities. The Welsh language is a particularly important element of the Welsh nation (Johnes, 2010: 1260), although its minority position today means that its role in Wales and Welshness is not without issue. Whereas Scotland retained autonomy from the British state through its religious, legal and educational institutions (Brown, et al., 1998: 1-3), there had been little to legally and administratively distinguish Wales from its dominant neighbour England since the Acts of Union of 1536 and 1543. However, Wales has nonetheless retained a cultural, linguistic and national distinctiveness despite this lack of autonomous legal, administrative and governmental institutions. The Welsh

[4] The following authors, for example, have emphasised the significant role that a national language plays in the history, development and nature of the modern nation: Hobsbawm (1994: 51-63), Hroch (2000), Anderson (2000, see Chapter Five), and Gellner (1983).

language and its cultural milieu[5] has been instrumental to its distinctive national existence, despite its decline throughout the twentieth century.

Described as the 'most material of all differences' (Johnes, 2016: 683), the Welsh language is a concrete and undeniable marker of Welsh identity, difference and distinctiveness. For this reason, it can and does play an important role in how Wales and Welshness is imagined, for Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers alike. It is a significant symbolic and tangible dispositif[6] of the Welsh nation. While the Welsh language was in a state of decline for much of the twentieth century, its place in Welsh life has undergone a significant transformation. In the late twentieth century, the language became more institutionalised and embedded in Welsh life[7]. Attitudes towards it underwent a rehabilitation, which saw it increasingly embraced and appreciated by communities from which it had previously been absent or in which it was marginal[8] (Johnes, 2012: 330; Cole and Williams, 2004: 571). Since the creation of a devolved National Assembly for Wales in 1999, a new "civic" space has emerged in which the Welsh language has been further embedded and rearticulated as an important dimension of a "civic" Welsh nation. In the years since devolution, the Welsh language has been reframed by political elites in Welsh political parties as something belonging to all of Wales[9]. Significantly, every political party in the National Assembly for Wales have publicly supported measures to increase the

[5] Burck describes language and culture as inextricably linked, in that language can be thought of as 'culture-soaked' (Burck, 2005: 23).

[6] Dispositifs are understood in this thesis as described by Deleuze (1992), as apparatuses that distribute the 'lines of visibility' that make certain objects intelligible. Deleuze describes it as a 'structuring of light, and the way in which it falls … distributing the visible and invisible, giving birth to objects which are dependent on it for their existence, and causing them to disappear' (1992: 160).

[7] This embeddedness was the result of certain gains made by Welsh language activists, which included a Welsh language channel, S4C, launched in 1982, the use of the Welsh language on road signs throughout all of Wales, the inclusion of Welsh on a national curriculum from 1988, and the Welsh Language Act of 1999 in which the Welsh language gained parity with English in the public sector.

[8] A survey published in 2018 by the Welsh Government found that eighty three per cent of non-Welsh speakers agreed that the Welsh language was something to be proud of, with nearly two thirds of non-Welsh speaking respondents agreeing that more should be done to support the language (Statistics for Wales, 2018: 8). Additionally, the changing fortunes of the Welsh language is exemplified by its expansion in education in Wales. There has been a resurgence in Welsh-medium education, with increasing demand in even Anglicised areas of south Wales leading to oversubscription (Hodges, 2012: 356).

[9] For example, it was described in inclusive terms in a 2003 action plan on the Welsh language as an 'essential and enduring component in the history, culture and social fabric of our nation' (Iaith Pawb, 2003: 1).

numbers of Welsh speakers, with the Labour party having recently stipulated the goal of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2017).

However, despite being arguably Wales' most powerful symbolic and material marker of distinctiveness, it can be a contentious and problematic basis for Welsh national identities due to its minority position. Welsh is only spoken by around a fifth of the Welsh population[10]. Its 'otherness' to much of the Welsh population means that its role in people's sense of Welshness is not straightforward. It can represent 'another' Wales, one from which people and communities can feel excluded (Roberts, 1999: 123). Despite its minority position, it can nonetheless play a significant role in how non-Welsh speakers articulate and understand Wales and Welshness. The place of the language in Welsh national "identities" and the Welsh nation has as much to do with its symbolic and discursive existence, and how it is negotiated with and understood, as does its use and practice. Therefore, the complexities of the Welsh language – its potential divisiveness, yet significance for Welsh national "identities" – provides a valuable access point for empirically exploring how the national self is constructed in relation to this *dispositif* of the Welsh nation and of Welshness.

Finally, Wales was selected as a case study because of a personal interest in national "identities" in the Welsh nation. The personal interest derives from my being both Welsh and a Welsh speaker. It was through studying Wales and its complex, contested and insecure national "identities" that the research project was formed. Additionally, the personal interest in the Welsh language shaped the decision to build the empirical research around it. Being a Welsh speaker, I am especially interested in the role that the Welsh language plays in national identity, how it features in debates and conversations about the Welsh nation, and how it is conceptualised in discourses of Welsh national identity. Therefore the Welsh nation, as well as providing a suitably rich case study for analysis, enables the theoretical framework developed by this thesis to be applied to the context which initially sparked the interest in the study of national identities.

[10] In 2011, 19 per cent (562,000) of residents in Wales aged three and over reported that they could speak Welsh (Office for National Statistics, 2012: 13).

Methodology

In deciding how to empirically investigate the Welsh national context using the theoretical framework and approaches, an interview-based approach was selected so as to explore people's personal reflections on their lived experiences of "national identity." The theoretical conceptualisation of the national self developed by this thesis is best explored through studying ordinary people's "everyday" interaction with the nation and their national selves. The interest in the "everyday" means that inspiration can be taken from the research approaches developed by theorists of "everyday" nationalism. This school of thought provides methodological approaches which are especially suited to uncovering people's personal relationship with the nation and nationality. This is because it presupposes that individuals construct their national self-understanding and their national context through interpreting the social world around them (Jones & Merriman, 2009: 166), and emphasises that, as people subjectively negotiate with their national context, and as national self-understanding is a mediation of context, people's biographical or personal experiences are of interest (Thompson, 2009: 128). Miller-Idriss and Fox, for example, outline a research approach which explores how people talk about, perform and consume the nation, and which emphasises that studying 'ordinary people's talk' through interviews and focus groups is a valuable method for investigating 'ordinary people's discursive representations of nationhood' (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 555). It is through analysing 'ordinary people's talk' that this thesis will apply and test its theoretical framework.

The method of data collection decided upon was individual interviews and focus groups. As Howarth writes, in-depth qualitative interviewing is an important means of getting at primary data for any approach which stresses the importance of subjectivity (Howarth, 2005: 338). By conducting in-depth research interviews with a sample of people, and gathering data on their reflections and thoughts on national "identity," their experiences with this concept, their conceptualisations of it, and its importance to them, the data gathered will enable a detailed investigation of all the ways that this framework can uncover and explain the national self. Through collecting this kind of data, the thesis will then be able to examine, for example: how individuals interact

and negotiate with certain discursive understandings of the nation and nationality; how, through interaction with discourse, they interpret their national context and produce their own national subjectivities; and how they can exercise agency or autonomy in how they produce their national self-understanding. Additionally, through analysing the participants' stated values, social expectations, ethical and moral positions, and conduct, data collected in this way can enable an examination of the extent to which the ethical and normative dimensions and implications of national subjectivities are evident.

Sample Selection

Being interested in the experiences of ordinary people with national identity, a wide variety of groups and individuals would have made appropriate subjects for study. The sample chosen was adult Welsh language learners. This sample was selected for a number of reasons. Firstly, the role of the Welsh language in contemporary Welsh national "identities" is particularly interesting. As mentioned above the language has been undergoing a reframing and reimagining. Its role in new notions of a "civic Wales," and changing attitudes towards the language, mean that it is finding its way into areas from which it had previously been absent. Rather than being confined to geographically and culturally specific rural communities, there are voices now emphasising the belonging of the language to all of Wales – a civic Wales articulated as an inclusive and multicultural nation (Chaney & Fevre, 2001). Exploring how research participants encounter and negotiate with different discourses of Welshness and the Welsh language therefore gives insight into a significant aspect of the politics of contemporary national "identities" in Wales.

Secondly, the data-richness of this sample enhances the thesis' capacity to "get at" national subjectivity. Studying this data-rich group overcomes a methodological issue raised by McCrone and Bechhofer, wherein the taken for granted nature of national identity for many makes it difficult to "get at." As a solution to this, they state that

> it is those people in problematic situations or places who turn out to be interesting and illuminating. They are not 'typical', but they highlight

> processes or experiences which tell us something about how identity operates, for whom and under what circumstances. (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 27)

Focusing on a group who are undergoing the process of learning Welsh enables an engagement with a group that is perhaps encountering their national selves and contexts in a more imminent way due to this process. They are all engaging with a national language which has in itself a particularly interesting role in how Wales is understood and represented, and are therefore engaging with a significant symbol or *dispositif* of the nation in which they are living. While learners at varying levels of Welsh language competency are interviewed, those approaching or that have reached fluency are in a particularly interesting position in that they have altered their "structural position" within the nation through acquiring a new language. What can be looked at is the extent to which this process sheds light on changes that might have occurred in their national and linguistic self-understanding.

Thirdly, this sample was comprised of people from a range of different backgrounds, but all undergoing the same process. This variety of backgrounds provides richer data as it means encountering a wider range of experiences that participants have had with their national selves. What was particularly beneficial to the project was that the sample was comprised of people originally from Wales and from elsewhere, often England. A little over half of the participants were originally from outside Wales. This sheds light on how those from Wales construct their national selves from this position as Welsh learners, and how those from elsewhere produce their national selves from this same position. Ultimately, as all participants are undergoing a similar process of learning Welsh, this ties together disparate experiences and reflections so as to provide a common frame of reference for the research.

Finally, on a practical level, studying Welsh language learners who were engaged in language classes, courses and summer schools provided an access point to interview participants. Through contacting conveners and teachers at institutions providing Welsh language classes, it was possible to find significant numbers of willing participants. Also, classes that agreed to be interviewed as a group enabled access to pre-formed groups. Individual interviews were arranged with individuals who

responded to calls for participants passed on by Welsh language tutors, and some focus groups conducted with Welsh language learners were arranged through the institutions that provided Welsh language courses and classes.

While focusing on one sample – Welsh language learners – means that there is a risk of drawing upon limited perspectives, the objective of this thesis is to advance theoretical tools to investigate the richness, depth, complexity and nuance of the national self, and thus the data-richness of a group that have undergone a change in their linguistic and also national positionality provides a more fruitful case for investigation. Other groups, such as first-language Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers, may also provide enriching and perhaps different insights, but as it was felt that Welsh-language learners offered the most data-rich sample for analysis, a singular-sample study was deemed the most suitable.

Method of Data Collection

Interviews were conducted with Welsh language learners in three locations across Wales: Aberystwyth, Cardiff and north Wales. Having originally hoped to find research participants in a more limited area in north Wales, the dispersed nature of Welsh language classes resulted in field work being carried out in a geographically wide area, ranging from Pwllheli in the west, Anglesey in the north, and Colwyn Bay and Mold in the east. There were two reasons as to why three geographically spread out regions were selected. Firstly, while either of the three locations, or any one other location in Wales, could have provided a complete field of study in itself, the aim of the thesis was to provide a study of a *national* context, which pointed at the need for more holistic approach to the Welsh nation. It was felt that through investigating a geographic spread of areas, the thesis would be better qualified to situate itself as a study of a national context. The second reason for selecting three geographic areas was to gain access to potential regional variations in how national identity was experienced and articulated, in order to better study the nuances of how national identities are experienced in the Welsh context. Thus the three locations broadly represent a geographic spread of north, central and south Wales. They cover areas

with different historic relationships to the Welsh language, and give access to contexts in which there are differing proportions of Welsh speakers[11].

The field work was carried out over eighteen months, beginning in the spring of 2016. The research interviews were a combination of individual one-on-one interviews and focus groups. In all, twenty participants were interviewed individually, and eight focus groups were held across the three regions. Individual interviews provided a more relaxed setting and enabled a more conversational approach, while group interviews provided a context in which participants were able to share experiences with a group, and reflect and react to the statements of others. Both types of interviews were semi-structured, in that a core of questions were asked to the participants, but the interviews were free to follow the direction of the conversation. The interviews were conducted in Welsh, English or both, depending on the preference of the interviewee. Interviews were recoded and transcribed for analysis.

The questions asked during the interviews[12] were designed to address the two key aspects of the national self that the theoretical framework investigates; the formation and nature of the national self, and its ethical dimension. Questions were asked so as to explore how participants constructed, experienced and encountered their national selves. These questions were designed to investigate how the participants understood and conceptualised various concepts, such as Wales, the nation, nationality, national identity and the Welsh language. They inquired into the participants' experiences of national identity and the nation. As they were Welsh language learners, there was a great deal to be asked about their experiences of gaining a new national language, and as some had moved to Wales from a different national context, their reflections on moving to a new national context were explored. Questions were also asked which explored values, ethical positions and social

[11] In the most recent data available, the percentage of people who claim to be able to speak Welsh in Gwynedd and Anglesey, where most of the north Wales participants are based, is 73.3 and 61.6 per cent respectively. Ceredigion reported that 58.2 per cent of its population can speak Welsh. The percentage of Welsh speakers in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan is given as 20.3 and 18.5 per cent respectively. It must be noted, however, that the absolute numbers of Welsh speakers in Cardiff is third only to Carmarthenshire and Gwynedd (StatsWales, 2018a).

[12] A full list of the research questions used in the interviews can be found in Appendix 2.

expectations, so as to examine the extent to which the nation and national subjectivity are reflected in their ethical subjectivity.

Data Analysis

What emerged out of the analysis of the collected data shaped the structure of the five empirical chapters of the thesis, in that it determined their thematic composition, and the overall insights and observations that are made about the nature of the national self. The data was approached with the particular understanding of subjectivity and discourse encapsulated in the theoretical framework. While the analysis began with a particular understanding of the nature, operations, processes and implications (ethical and normative) of the national self, and was approached with the intention of exploring how these themes are evidenced in the data, ultimately the insights and claims that could be made about the national self were determined by what emerged from the collected data itself. The analysis of the data involved an impressionistic reading of transcripts, whereby material which indicated, exemplified or supported the particular understanding of national subjectivity put forth by the subjectivity-discourse framework were collected and thematically arranged. The data itself was allowed to speak, such that the analysis enabled other observations and insights to be made into the national self that were either unexpected or previously overlooked.

Based on the analysis of the data, five empirical chapters were formed around various themes which demonstrate how the theoretical framework can explain and shed light on the nature of the national self. While the intention initially was to present empirical chapter organized around the three regional locations, the analysis of the data showed regional distinctions to be rather muted. Additionally, an organisation of the chapters along thematic lines put the focus on the insights that the theoretical perspective could make into the national self. The themes that emerged are: the discursive construction of the nation and of the national subject; the negotiation by individuals with normative understandings of "nationality;" the complex negotiation by individuals with the Welsh language in their understanding of Welshness and their

own national subjectivity; the extent of the ethical dimension of national subjectivity; and the contextual and temporally specific nature of the national subject. Each of these thematic chapters draw on the collected data in order to demonstrate the insights that a subjectivity-discourse approach to studying the national self can provide into it.

Positionality and Complications

It is necessary to address my positionality as a researcher studying one's own context. There are both problems and benefits which derive from my positionality as Welsh and a Welsh-speaker studying the context of Wales. Firstly, I am studying a familiar context. Certain issues arise from researching the familiar. For example, that which is taken for granted can be missed or overlooked, and the analysis of a familiar context can be shaped by preconceived notions and understandings (Mannay, 2016: 30). While all research is tinged with preconceived ideas and knowledge (Malterud, 2001: 484), a position of familiarity can be especially accused of lacking a necessary 'objectivity and emotional distance from the field' (Mannay, 2016: 27). This 'outsider myth' ignores the benefits of familiarity, but does nonetheless suggest practical issues to be aware of in conducting research in a familiar context (Mannay, 2016: 28), and emphasises that reflexivity and a critical attitude about the researcher's position is beneficial (Malterud, 2001: 484). So as to partially address the potential 'contamination' of the analysis of the interview material by the researcher's own perspective, preconceived ideas and assumptions, the empirical chapters will use extracts taken from the interviews, so as to make the statements from the participants and their intended meaning as accessible and open to the reader as possible (Griggs, 2005: 123).

The position of familiarity confers substantial benefits. Researching the familiar can 'elicit greater understanding because cultural and linguistic barriers do not have to be negotiated' (Mannay, 2016: 30). Thus studying a familiar environment means an intimate knowledge of the social, cultural and political landscape within the context. This is especially beneficial to the thesis as the analysis of discourses in interview data

relies on a deep contextual understanding. In order to get from interview statements to analytical claims about discourses, Hansen and Sørensen write that 'considerable knowledge is needed about the discursive patterns of meaning that are in play in a given social setting' (2005: 114). Starting from this insider position means a greater familiarity with the context at hand and with its social, cultural and political landscape.

A second issue arises from my positionality as a researcher. The relationship between myself and the research participants is coloured by my positionality as a first language Welsh speaker. This position has the potential to influence the tone of the discussion in interviews and the participants' capacity or willingness to speak openly about certain topics. There may be some things that participants do not feel comfortable saying. The Welsh language can be a deeply and passionately felt issue for many, which makes it a potentially sensitive topic. In interviews, I attempted as far as possible to make the participants' own opinions and views the focus of attention, emphasised that they should feel free to express things as they wish, and stated at the beginning of all interviews that "there were no wrong answers." However, it would be unrealistic not to acknowledge that my position as a first-language Welsh speaker in particular had shaped the way they framed and worded their answers. The desire to avoid conflict and disagreement in one-on-one situations in particular can result in participants self-censoring and wording opinions more carefully than they otherwise would. The focus group interviews were environments in which people felt more ready to disagree with one another, and it was in these interviews that somewhat stronger opinions were sometimes expressed, as statements could be directed at no-one in particular, and viewpoints were often shared by others.

Another methodological issue that has to be considered is that the framing of the interview as a discussion about national identity sets out the context and frame of reference before the interview had even started. The context of the interviews means that conducts and decisions expressed by participants as "national" conducts and choices may be only articulated as such due to the framing of the interview as a conversation about national identity. While this is not an insurmountable methodological issue, it has to be acknowledged and taken into account especially in examining statements made which relate to the "when" of the nation.

Thesis Structure and Arguments

The thesis will proceed as follows. Chapter One will outline the theoretical issues with the concept of "national identity" that this thesis addresses. In this chapter, a review of the literature on the nation, nationalism, and national identity will provide a critique of how national identity has been conceptualised, and used as an explanatory and analytical tool. This review will draw out some of the more successful studies into national identity that can be built upon, and will argue that these studies provide insight in spite of the concept of identity rather than because of it.

Chapter Two will explain the alternative subjectivity-discourse approach for studying the national self that this thesis advances. This chapter will set out in detail the theoretical framework based on the notions of subjectivity and discourse as developed by Michel Foucault and the Essex School of Discourse Theory. The theoretical framework will be broken down into an exploration of two broad and interrelated aspects of the national self with which this thesis is concerned; its formation and nature, and its ethical dimension. The theoretical framework will elucidate how the theoretical concepts and works used will enable these aspects of the national self to be uncovered, conceptualised, explained and examined.

Chapter Three will introduce the case study at hand; the Welsh nation. While the empirical focus of this thesis is on the national subjectivities of ordinary people living in Wales, this chapter will explain the context in which national subjectivities in Wales have been, and are, constructed. It will give an overview of some prominent ways that Welsh national identities are articulated today, focusing on the political discourses which seek to present unified notions of Wales and Welshness. Following this, the chapter will provide an account of how Wales' fractured national identities came about, and will end with a brief look at how, despite the attempt to present more unified discourses of Welshness, these fractures still shape notions of Wales and Welshness today.

Chapter Four will be the first of five empirical chapters in which the interview data collected with research participants in analysed. This chapter explores how the

research participants creatively negotiate with various discursive constructs, such as "the nation," Wales, England and Great Britain. Using the notions of discourse set out in the theoretical framework, this chapter examines how the participants construct their understanding of their national context. It examines the notion that the nation is in fact an empty signifier (Torfing, 1999), and the implications of this. Using the data, it explores this claim, and examines the operations and processes involved in how participants populate this empty signifier of the nation with meaning, and how they actively construct, understand, and articulate their "national" landscape. This chapter therefore provides insights into the openness of the notion of the nation, the agency with which national constructs can articulated, the processes through which they are given meaning, but also the limitations of this openness.

Chapter Five will explore how participants understand the concept of nationality, and will investigate how discourses of nationality confer norms and rules as to how nationality is assessed and understood. The subjectivity-discourse approach takes the view that discourse confers a normative framework through which nationality is assessed in relation to norms and discursive rules. Participants' articulations of nationality draw upon and reinforce certain normative understandings of it, and make implicit claims as to how it ought to be understood. Of particular interest, then, is how the participants perceive nationality as fixed or flexible, and therefore how they negotiate with civic or ethnic discourses of nationality. It will be demonstrated that participants, in answering questions as to the possibility of changing nationality, expressed a spectrum of opinions, demonstrating a variety of fluid and fixed understandings of nationality. The chapter will argue that a fluid or fixed understanding of nationality depends on the extent to which participants conform to or internalise either a certain discursive understanding of nationality which privileges fixed identity markers, such as birthplace and ancestry, or a more "civic" understanding of nationality which privileges choice and identity markers such as residence. It will be demonstrated that participants can negotiate with these discursive norms of nationality, and that while some participants adhere to certain discursive rules which derive from a more fixed notion of nationality, many reject or mostly reject this understanding of nationality, sometimes on ethical grounds, instead

articulating nationality through a different discursive understanding which employs a different set of norms of rules, ones that privilege less fixed markers of identity.

Chapter Six examines how the participants understand the role of the Welsh language in Welshness, and how the language is deployed in their own national self-understanding. It will begin with an analysis of how participants describe the role of the language in the nation. Secondly, it will explore the role that the Welsh language plays in the participants' own sense of Welshness. It will be argued here that the language can be seen to perform a different role in their national subjectivities depending on whether or not they are from Wales originally, or from elsewhere. It will also be demonstrated that participants can ignore the "frame" of the nation, and articulate a social identity specifically as a Welsh learner. Thus the language can be articulated apart from its role as a national language. Thirdly, having approached this theme with a particular understanding of the fluid and reiterated nature of the subject, it will be argued that the participants' opinions on the role of the Welsh language in Wales and Welshness demonstrate the invocation of different discursive positions in different contexts. Specifically, what will be highlighted is, firstly, that the participants' own national subjectivities draw on discourses of Welshness that privilege the Welsh language, but also, secondly, that in describing the role of the Welsh language in abstract, what is invoked is a more civic, inclusive and multicultural stance on what constitutes Welshness. It will be argued that this demonstrates the contextual nature of the national subject, in that the same participants can invoke different discursive positions on the Welsh language and Welshness. It will also be argued that this demonstrates how participants are navigating ethical schemata in how they express themselves, as the invocation of a more civic understanding of Welshness is shaped by the moral hegemony of this discourse in Wales today.

Chapter Seven will explore how the nation figures in the participants' ethical subjectivity. The subjectivity-discourse approach takes the view that subjectivities are inherently ethical, and that negotiating with discourse involves a negotiation with ethical schemata and positions. By navigating discourse, individuals construct the ethical stances through which they evaluate social phenomena. This chapter is concerned with how the nation figures in an individual's values and ethics. It

examines the values, opinions and social expectations that were expressed by the participants in response to certain different lines of questioning. The chapter argues that the nation does figure in people's ethical subjectivity, but that *national* obligations, expectations, and notions of good or bad national conduct, draw on a civic understanding of nationalism. In its first part, the chapter demonstrates that participants' values and ethical positions on issues relating to the nation demonstrate three broadly discernible discursive positions or logics: cosmopolitan discourses which reject the nation and nationality as important; a chauvinistic or exclusive notion of nationalism that was universally rejected; and an inclusive and tolerant civic "nationalism," which was widely adhered to. It will be argued, then, that broadly liberal values and ideals take precedence over national considerations, and that national obligations and expectations, when expressed, are articulated in line with a discourse which emphasises a form of liberal and civic nationalism. The second part of the chapter examines the extent to which national considerations shape the participants' ethical outlook through examining the participants' reflections on how people *should* relate to the Welsh language. It will be demonstrated that the motivation to learn Welsh was driven by local considerations that outweighed any sense of national obligation, and that respecting personal choice precludes the participants from negatively reflecting on those who do not learn the language.

Chapter Eight, through an analysis of the collected interview data, will examine the contextual dimension of national subjectivities and their temporally specific nature. A fundamental problem with notions of identity is the connotation of fixity, permanence or latency. The subjectivity-discourse approach emphasises that subjectivities are contextual and temporally specific. This chapter will explain the contextual and fleeting nature of the national subject using the notion of discourse put forth by the Discourse Theorists, which, it will be argued, assumes that discourse, subjectivities, and therefore social identities such as national "identity" are continually reiterated and reproduced. This chapter, then, will examine how the participants' reflections on and experiences of their national selves demonstrate the need for national subjectivity to be understood as fluid, reiterated and contextual. Specifically, this chapter will look at the contexts and situations in which participants encounter the

nation and their national selves, but also the contexts in which they themselves may be able to invoke the nation and their national selves, and interpret their social world through it.

Finally, the conclusion will draw together all the insights and observations made into the national self in the five empirical chapters, and will recant how the theoretical framework that this thesis advances enables a deeper penetration into the nature and implications of the national self than previous studies which have taken "national identity" as their focus.

What will be contributed, then, is greater insight into the formation and the nature of the national subject; that is, how national subjects come to constitute and understand their national context, how they form their own national subjectivities, and how national subjectivities are lived and experienced. Moreover, the thesis will contribute new insights into the ethical and normative dimensions of national subjectivities, and will examine the extent to which national subjectivities shape the individual's ethical existence.

Chapter One – Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter will review the existing literature on the nation, nationalism, and national identity. This thesis argues that the conceptualisation of the national self as national subjectivity provides a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of this aspect of life than the concept of "national identity." The purpose of this chapter, then, is to critique the literature that deals with national identity, and to demonstrate the insufficiency of the concept and problems that arise from its use. The chapter will establish the weaknesses of "national identity," but it will also explore the more promising and valuable studies that have tackled the national self, and that have overcome or avoided the problems that arise from this hegemonic yet vague and imprecise concept.

The chapter will begin with a review of the traditional literature of nations and nationalism. The lack of attention paid to national identity or the 'inner world' of national denizens by those that have studied the nation and nationalism will be examined. Following this, the chapter will turn to the literature that has studied national identity specifically, and will critique and appraise the contributions to this field of study. It will be argued that the more valuable studies of the national self have been successful despite the concept of "national identity," and that the use of broadly postmodern or constructivist approaches, which challenge notions of a latent and fixed "identity" of the subject, have provided the most insightful studies of the national self.

Literature on Nations and Nationalism

There is a large body of literature from scholars of nations and nationalism that have attempted to explain the nature of the nation, its origins, and its role in the world. This literature is comprised of a number of schools that disagree fundamentally on

how to explain and theorise the nation. What many of them have in common, however, is a lack of attention paid conceptually and methodologically to the matter of national identity (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 9; Edensor, 2002: 1). The attention of these authors has been focused on the historical development of the nation and uncovering the character of, and motivations behind nationalist movements (Ichijo et al., 2017: 453). Various schools of nations and nationalism studies have contributed to the conceptualisation of the nation, and have explored context-specific histories of the development of various nations, providing tools and approaches with which similar sociological histories of nations, nationalisms and national identities can be carried out (Hroch, 1998; 2000).

Modernism

Modernist authors such as Ernest Gellner, John Breuilly, and Eric Hobsbawm have contributed seminal works to the study of the nation. They emphasise its constructedness, its particularly modern nature, and, in some instances, its political nature as an instrument of rule (Smith, 2005: 170). These modernists challenged previously held assumptions that the nation is a primordial or perennial social grouping. Gellner saw the nation and nationalism as a necessity of the industrial age, shaped by the reliance of industrial society on culturally homogenous, loyal, competent, uniform and 'substitutable' citizens (Smith, 2005: 35-36, 39; Gellner, 2005: 44-47). Hobsbawm believed the nation belonged 'exclusively to a particular, and historically recent, period', and emphasised the 'element of artefact, invention and social engineering which enters into the making of nations' (Hobsbawm, 1994: 9-10; Hobsbawm, 1996). He stated that '[n]ations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way round' (Hobsbawm, 1994: 10).

A particular feature of modernism is its top-down and instrumental understanding of nationalism (Smith, 2009: 15). For example, Breuilly's work on the nation and nationalism focuses heavily on 'political movements seeking or exercising state power and justifying such arguments with nationalist arguments' (Breuilly, 1993: 2). Hobsbawm was similarly concerned with how the nation was constructed from above,

by ‘elites organising the newly enfranchised masses’ (Smith, 2005: 129). Channelling the instrumental rationalism of other modernist authors, Hobsbawm writes that ‘states and regimes had every reason to reinforce … state patriotism with the sentiments and symbols of ‘imagined community’’ (Hobsbawm, 1994: 10-11, 91).

Anthony D. Smith, the leading figure of the ethno-symbolist school, claims that the focus of modernist authors on the instrumentality of nationalism to political actors, and their focus on the material and political domains of the nation, fail to enter the ‘inner world’ of people, explain the passionate attachment to the nation, and the motivation for collective action in the name of the nation (Smith, 2009: 16). Indeed *national identity* takes a surprisingly subordinate role in the modernist school considering its centrality to nationalism and the formation and continuing existence of nations.

Smith asks whether it is possible to consider political nationalism without considering national identity:

> Are they not intimately conjoined, not just on occasion, but in all cases? After all, the fostering of such a sense of national identity is a prime objective of nationalist movements … If nationalism creates ‘nations’, does it not also create ‘national identities’…? (Smith, 2009: 91; Breuilly, 1993: 379-380)

Hobsbawm, despite his overall top-down approach, was acutely aware that the nation must also be analysed from below, a task he described as ‘exceedingly difficult’ (Hobsbawm, 1994: 11). Hobsbawm writes that the ‘official ideologies of states of movements are not guides to what is in the minds of the most loyal citizen or supporters’ (Hobsbawm, 1994: 11). This underdeveloped, bottom-up aspect of his work brings attention to the importance of national identity and the insufficiency of an analysis of the nation which focuses on the instrumental rationality of elites (Hobsbawm, 1994: 11, Smith, 2005: 128). Hobsbawm argues that the nation ‘cannot be understood unless also analysed from below, that is in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longing and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessary national and still less nationalist’ (Hobsbawm, 1994: 10). This perspective emphasises

the need for a theoretical and methodological approach to studying the nation that can sufficiently explore the ordinary people who are the objects of nationalists and national ideas (Hobsbawm, 1994: 11).

Benedict Anderson brought the attention closer to the 'inner world' of the national subject. His highly influential contribution to the literature on the nation and nationalism brought new insights into the nature of "nation-ness," and sought to consider how nations command 'such profound emotional legitimacy' (Anderson, 1991: 4). In other words, how and why do people identify so strongly with a nation? This contributed to the modernist paradigm a focus on the nation at a more cultural and psychological level (Smith, 1991: 142). Anderson sees the nation as the result of material changes, such as the developments in the technology and nature of print capitalism, the expanding vernacular print market, and the formation of vernacular communities and mass readership (Anderson, 1991: 40; 44). These developments, argues Anderson, enabled the 'invisible visibility' of the nation, and establishes the nation as an 'imagined community'. All communities larger than the village are imagined, but Anderson argues that the imagined community of the nation is different in its *style* (1991: 6). It is imagined as limited, in that it has finite, if elastic boundaries, and the nation is imagined as a community conceived as 'a deep, horizontal comradeship' (1991: 7). A member of a nation will never meet more than a handful of their fellow nationals, yet this 'imagined political community', imagined as both 'inherently limited and sovereign', gives the member of the nation 'complete confidence in their steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity' (Anderson, 1991: 6; 26).

It is this sense of comradeship, fraternity and community that drives people to willingly die for such limited imaginings (1991: 7). People identify with this national community, and can demonstrate great emotional attachment to it. Nationalism, Anderson points out, is closer to 'religion' or 'kinship' that any political ideology in that it has an 'emptiness' and 'incoherence' (1991: 5-6). The nation is especially significant as it, unlike Liberalism or Marxism, it is concerned with death and immortality – 'it concerns itself with the links between the dead and the yet unborn, the mystery of re-generation' (Anderson, 1991: 11).

Indeed this metaphor of the nation and nationalism as a form of religion is commonly deployed. Rousseau and Hobsbawm have made the comparison of nationalism or patriotism as a 'civic religion' (Hobsbawm, 1994: 85), and Anderson and Smith have noted how the nation and religion share in invoking a sense of immortality, after-life and continuity (Smith, 2009:78). Smith writes that the nation sees 'the salvation drama of collective death and national resurrection in and through the everyday world of the individual and the masses of the nation' (2009: 79). Frequent comparisons are also made between the nation and family or kinship[13]. Anderson writes that the nation is characterised as 'disinterested' due to the perceived 'naturalness' of the nation and the 'unchosen' connection that people share with their community (1991: 143). The 'halo of disinterestedness' is then associated by Anderson with the family, which is the 'domain of disinterested love and solidarity' (Anderson, 1991: 144). These allusions to religion or kinship are attempts to grapple with the continuing power of the nation in the lives of its denizens and the potential fervour that national identification can take; yet these comparisons fail to deliver an explanation or valuable conceptualisation of national identity.

Ethno-Symbolism

Anthony D. Smith has developed the work of the modernists in an attempt to provide a perspective on the 'inner world' of those identifying with nations, and an explanation for the intensity of feeling that can accompany this identity (Smith, 2005: 190). Smith is critical of the modernists' lack of emphasis on social psychological factors (2009: 15). He disagrees with how modernists assign to institutions and the modern state a significant role in the 'construction' or fabrication of the nation and nationalism, and argues that even modernists cannot ignore the existence of that perennial 'something' that existed before the modern nation (Smith, 2009: 7).

[13] Several Primordialist and Perennialist authors have in the past used these metaphors of family to explain the nature of national or ethnic identity; seeing ethnic groups as forms of extended kinship pyramided on family ties (Horowitz, in Smith, 2005: 165), or as fully extended families, who share 'an intergenerational link to common ancestors' (Fishman in Smith, 2005: 160-161).

Smith's search for an explanation for national identity stems from his belief that the power of the nation in people's lives, and the attachment felt by its adherents to its culture and history, cannot derive from cultural elements that are constructed, fabricated or discursively produced. He writes that whatever the nation is, 'the result is more than a construct and a discursive formation' (Smith, 2009: 14). He adds that 'people do not lay down their lives for a discursive formation', and that a discursive approach cannot explain the 'real' consequences such ideas have upon how people act (Smith, 2009: 13). Smith, for example, deems Anderson's 'imagining' of the nation as insufficient:

> How can emphasis upon imagination and the imagined community enable us to grasp the power of the nation and nationalism? … What was it about the nation, and what was it about so many people's circumstances, that made them feel bound into 'nations' and assert their 'national' rights? For the nation, as we shall see, is not only known and imagined: it is also deeply felt and acted out. (Smith, 2005: 137)

Smith's answer as to the strength of feeling towards the nation is to invoke the 'myth-symbolic complex' that focuses on the role of ethnic communities in the formation of nations' (Smith, 2009: 24). The passion expressed towards the nation is explained as a 'resonance' or affinity by a particular ethnic community with the symbolic, cultural and ethnic realm of nationhood (Smith, 2009: 26). The 'content' of nations or nationalisms – myths, symbols, memories and values – are seen as pre-existing cultural elements, and as Smith argues,

> only those symbolic elements that have some prior resonance among a large section of the population (and especially of its dominant *ethnie*) will be able to furnish the content of the proposed nation's political culture. (Smith, 2009: 31)

Thus the passion that individuals feel for the nation with which they identify is accounted for by the appeal that various 'folk memories, myths, symbols, customs and traditions', taken from their 'homelands', have for the population (Smith, 2009: 71). Those most promising or successful myths, memories and traditions – or those that

meet the criteria of being historically plausible and popularly resonant – are then generalised, expanded or pruned (Smith, 2009: 71). But these cultural elements, Smith argues, are 'rediscovered' by nationalists, not invented (Smith, 2005: 45; 112). They have 'popular resonance because they are founded on living traditions of the people (or segments thereof) which serve both to unite and to differentiate them from their neighbours' (Smith, 2005: 45-46).

Smith has indeed shifted the focus onto national identity and the 'inner worlds' of national denizens in that he is concerned with explaining the identifying with a nation. However, there exist some issues with his conceptualisations of the nation and national identity which limit their usefulness. Smith's insistence on the resonance with the perceptibly "authentic" anchors the nation and national identity in a particular set of historical and "actually existing" cultural elements. While nations and national identities do heavily incorporate historical and cultural elements into their articulation, Smith's position on the 'discursive' imply that these elements are perennial and consistent in their form. Smith's issue with a discursive explanation is that a nation could not possibly be the sum of its cultural representation or reducible to discursive formations (Smith, 2009: 14). He takes issue with this approach which would suggest 'the nation possesses no reality independent of its images and representations' (Smith, 2005: 137). What Smith cannot concede, it seems, is the possibility that the power and force of identification with the nation derives from a fabricated, constructed and specifically modern ideological formation, divorced from a tangible reality. Smith's belief is that the intensity and power of national identity must derive from some perceptibly "authentic" cultural elements, from that 'perennial something' (Smith, 2009: 7).

This is problematic because instead of looking at how certain cultural elements and symbols are used and articulated within national society, and how they are potentially differently received and understood by those identifying with a nation, depending on context, place, time or ideological standpoint, it reifies the existence of certain historical cultural elements as an essence of a nation and national identity. Indeed Smith's work, as Malešević has pointed out, reifies a concept of national identity which presents it as 'firm, stable and given' (Malešević, 2006: 20). The issue derives

partly from the level of analysis which guides Smith's work. His work is concerned with defining and explaining the nation, and his approach to national identity similarly attempts to define those things that give the nation a bounded and common identity, and which provide a repertoire of shared values, symbols and traditions that remind members of their common heritage and cultural kinship (Smith, 1991: 16). The shortcomings of this approach is that the concept of national identity is articulated as an identity which belongs to a nation, a bounded, tangible and coherent sense of common identity that unites a community, as opposed to a personal lived experience (Malešević, 2006: 20). It is the *nation's* identity that is the object of his analysis. This approach makes his notion of national identity unsuitable for any exploration of the subjective and personal lived experience of national identity.

While Smith (2009: 33) did state that rival narratives of the nation can be fought over by national groups, and that the meaning of symbols can change over time, his concern with a reified national identity says little about how individuals come to make sense of their national existence, and how national identities are differently internalised. Furthermore, Edensor has pointed out that Smith's focus on historical cultural elements, such as symbols, customs, ceremonies and myths, cannot account for the extremely dynamic and ambiguous contemporary constructions of national identity (Edensor, 2002: 9). This focus 'obfuscates the everyday, taken for granted, cultural commonsensical practices as well as the popular forms circulated in a mass culture' (Edensor, 2002: 9). While historical material is important to how nations are perceived and consumed, the nation and national identity should be understood as continually articulated through shifting and ever-emerging discourses. This discursive construction and reconstruction of the nation, and the flexible and negotiated internalisation of the nation by individuals is therefore left unaccounted for by Smith.

Literature on National Identity

A number of scholars have conducted research which places national identity at the centre of their projects, and have developed new conceptual and methodological

approaches to its study. National identity as a concept has been severely underdeveloped, referred to by McCrone and Bechhofer as 'the puny child of muscular parents, namely, 'nation' and 'nationalism'' (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 9; Ichijo et al. 2017: 453). The literature on the nation has long focused on nations and nationalism, with McCrone and Bechhofer pointing out that 'when issues of national identity are raised, rather than examining them directly, the discussion usually ends up debating what constitutes a nation, and how national ideology arises' (Ichijo et al., 2017: 453). 'The literature on nations and nationalism', writes Edensor, 'has been dominated by a focus on the historical origins of the nation and its political lineaments' (2002: 1).

The study of national identity has been hampered by a lack of conceptual clarity as to what national identity is. Indeed the ambiguity of the concept of "identity," and the sheer breadth of what it attempts to represent, makes it highly problematic and insufficient. For example, "national identity" refers to at least two levels of identity: it can refer to individual personal national identities or a national identity that belongs to nations; an identity or narrative collectively forged by a nation around questions of 'who we are' and 'where we are going' (Guillaumond, 2016: 115; Verdugo & Milne, 2016: 17). This thesis is concerned with "national identity" at the level of the individual, and their personal relationship with it, but even within this level of analysis the concept of "national identity" is problematic.

Studies into national identity have had to engage with a concept that 'covers too much ground to be analytically useful', and that brings confusion instead of 'theoretical and methodological clarity' (Malešević, 2006: 35). A number of authors have written critiques of the notion of identity and national identity and have outlined the weaknesses of such concepts. Brubaker and Cooper's work on identity (2000), which also delves into national identity, problematises the very use of the term identity as an analytical category. "Identity," they argue, is problematic because it covers both essentialist and constructivist meanings, and both hard and soft notions of identity (2000: 1). Building upon this critique, Malešević writes that identity's weakness and redundancy as a conceptual tool derives from the way it is utilised either in 'a restricted and essentialist or an all-embracing and vague way' (Malešević,

2006: 37). In other words, "national identity" can refer to different theoretical traditions, invoking both essentialised or constructivist meanings, and it can mean either a fixed and stable "identity" or a fleeting, fluid and multiple position that is temporarily occupied. The problem, then, is that the term "identity" is 'riddled with ambiguity, riven with contradictory meanings, and encumbered by reifying connotations' (2000: 34). On the one hand, its use, even in a constructivist sense, invokes essentialist and reifying connotations. On the other hand, as Brubaker and Cooper ask (2000: 6), by emphasising a constructivist notion of "identity" as multiple, fragmented and fluid, should what is being studied even be conceptualised as identity as all?

National identity also problematically refers to multiple elements, aspects or processes. Malešević describes identity as 'no more than a common name for many different and distinct processes that need to be explained' (Malešević, 2006: 36). Billig similarly stated that national identity 'frequently explains less than it appears to', and that 'an investigation of national identity should aim to disperse the concept of 'identity' into different elements' (Billig, 2014: 60). Brubaker and Cooper argue that the 'overburdened' term "identity" can be unbundled into a number of different aspects that have tangled around it: 'identification' and 'categorization', 'self-understanding', and 'groupness' or 'commonality' (2000: 14-21). As a result of the breadth of what it covers, they question the use of a singular term which covers so much ground. Because of the slipperiness of the concept, Verdugo and Milne have referred to national identity as an "ideal type," in that it is a concept that is meant to 'help scholars make sense of a chaotic world, not to completely represent reality' (2016: 2). Some have gone further, and have questioned whether national identity meaningfully exists (Malešević, 2011). That such a diverse array of operations and sentiments can be represented under the term "identity" points to the fact that its use in the literature cannot necessarily fully capture or represent the way it is being conceptualised and envisioned when articulated as an analytical category.

The conceptual ambiguity of national identity has led many of the authors that have studied it to attempt to refine it by identifying certain elements of 'nation-ness' that

identity is often deployed as a shorthand for[14], and building methodological and theoretical approaches to explore these limited aspects of the national self. One such approach is the study of 'everyday nationhood' by a number of authors such as Michael Billig, Tim Edensor, Jon E. Fox and Cynthia Miller-Idriss. Their work looks at how nationhood is invoked, flagged and articulated in day-to-day life such that national denizens are reminded of their nationhood, and continually encounter the nation, even if in mundane and banal ways. In his seminal text *Banal Nationalism,* Billig (2014) studies how nationalism is an endemic condition in modern life which operates through the continuous flagging of banal and unnoticed reminders of nationhood (2014: 6; 93). His work, through looking at how the nation is discursively flagged in the embedded routines of social life, provides insight into how one is continually reminded of nationhood and one's national context (Billig, 2014: 175). Billig's focus on the banal and everyday addresses a problem in much of the literature on nations and nationalism, whereby the term nationalism is reserved for 'outbreaks of 'hot' nationalist passion', omitting its daily reproduction from theoretical awareness (Billig, 2014: 44). Hroch, for example, does not describe what happens to nationalism once the nation-state is established (Billig, 2014: 44). The continuing presence of the nation in the daily lives and self-identification of individuals is overlooked. Billig's concern with the nation in the mundane, banal daily lives of individuals addresses this, arguing that individuals are continually reminded of their national existence by the continual 'flagging' of the nation through means as diverse as flags on buildings and references in national newspapers to the collective 'we' (Billig, 2014). Shifting the attention away from 'hot' and overt forms of nationalism, Billig writes that '[i]t seems strange to suppose that occasional [hot nationalist] events, bracketed off from ordinary life, are sufficient to sustain continuingly remembered national identity' (Billig, 2014: 46).

For Billig, the epitome of banal nationalism is the 'unwaved flag' – those 'thousands upon thousands of flags [that] each day hang limply in public places', acting as forgotten reminders (Billig, 2014: 38). These daily reminders can be found as a

[14] For example, Bikhu Parekh has articulated national identity as 'a cluster of tendencies and values' as opposed to a 'substance' (2010).

background to political discourse and cultural products, and even, as Billig points out, in how newspapers are written (Billig, 2014: 8). It is the focus on the mundane everyday that makes Billig's contribution so valuable, and also his insight into how the banal nature of nationalism in daily life leads to its being 'forgotten', unnoticed, and its significance for the structuring of life concealed. For example, Billig makes the point that identity is embodied in habits of social life, such as the way we use and think about language, such that the nation and nationality are continually flagged when society and the state are talked about. Using the concept of deixis – the use of language as a form of rhetorically pointing – Billig brings to our attention the subtle daily reminders of nationhood embodied in each use of the term 'we' (Billig, 2014: 106). Whether in political speeches, newspaper articles or in daily conversation, ambiguous terms such as 'we', 'our', and even 'the' (as in, 'the' country, 'the' weather, 'the' people) have their meaning interpreted, and evoke certain interpretations. In such instances, the nation, the 'homeland', is 'made both present and unnoticeable by being presented as *the* context' (Billig, 2014: 109). The nation is flagged, yet unnoticed.

Edensor (2002) has used Billig's approach to analyse national identity as grounded in popular culture and the everyday. Edensor states that the study of national identity is weighted towards 'heritage' and the 'common past', which results in an ignoring of 'the things we watch and read, the places we visit, the things we buy and the pictures we display' (2002: 17). Emphasising the everyday and mundane ways in which people encounter national discourses, Edensor argues that 'a sense of national identity is … found in the constellations of a huge cultural matrix of images, ideas, spaces, things, discourses and practices' (2002: 17). Thus Edensor's work explores how national identity is encountered through a diverse range of "everyday" phenomena and objects such as national places, spaces and landscapes, theatre performance, cars and their representation, and films.

Edensor and Billig, however, both leave under-explored the subjective experience of the identifying individual in their negotiation with discursive meaning, and they provide little as to what this "national identity" is that is being flagged, encountered or invoked through daily interaction with representations of the nation. The focus is on

the encounter of the nation in the external world, even if unconsciously. Jones and Merriman (2009) have to some extent addressed this lack of attention paid to the internalisation of the flagged nation. Their work looks into road signs in Wales as banal signifiers or 'abstractions' of the state (2009: 167). Arguing that Billig has a tendency to separate 'hot' and 'banal' nationalism, Jones and Merriman state that 'the same process or artefact may be viewed as banal and/or hot in character by different agents', depending upon the discourses through which agents make sense of these symbols (2009: 166). Thus road signs – mundane abstractions of the state – became symbols of oppression to Welsh language activists (Jones & Merriman, 2009: 165). This insight delves deeper into the context of the individual actor as they internalise the discourses around them. It addresses the multiple ways in which a signifier such as a road sign can be made sense of and discursively understood. In doing so, this approach implies that identity is subjectively constructed in relation to the discursive landscape which flags the nation, and that the relationship between the individual and the signifier is a significant element in understanding how identities are formed and shaped.

Thompson (2007) has made a valuable contribution to the study of the national self through exploring the situational and contextual dimension of nationality and national self-identification. Thompson, taking the view that self-understanding is a product of 'momentary interactional encounters', argues that nationality is not something that one 'just has', but that it is constituted in passing moments in which people establish themselves as Welsh or British (Thompson, 2007: 126-130). Using interview based research, he identifies how nationality is experienced at different points across a lifecourse, and studies 'national identification as a situational social act that occurs within everyday life *over time*' (Thompson, 2007: 128). He therefore presents a view of national identification in which national identity is constituted in the everyday moments which invite and prompt individuals to identify nationally, or through reference to the category of nationality (2007: 139). Additionally, the situation and contextual environment of national identification has a bearing on national self-understanding, as it is shaped, but not determined, by the cultural, social and political changes that occur over time.

Fox (2017) and Fox and Miller-Idriss (2008) also contribute to the "everyday" approach, in texts that look at the 'practices and processes through which nationhood is reproduced in everyday life by its ordinary practitioners' (2008: 554). Fox and Miller-Idriss (2008) put forth a research programme that proposes everyday nationhood be studied in four ways: the way the nation is discursively produced through talk; the way that nationhood frames the choices people make; the way the nation is performed; and the way the nation is consumed through everyday consumption habits (2008: 587-538). As well as outlining insightful ways that the nation and its denizens interact, they propose some methodological approaches in order to explore people's national selves. They emphasise the importance of studying the contexts of the nation as well as the content; the "when" of the nation as well as the "what" (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 555-557).

Fox and Miller-Idriss suggest methodological approaches that 'leave people to their own devices' (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 557). Interview and focus group approaches should allow, but not compel, those being interviewed to frame their responses in national terms, so as to gauge 'when, how and in what (discursive) contexts the nation becomes a meaningful frame for ordering difference, explaining predicaments and interpreting social phenomena' (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 557). What is particularly valuable about the work of these authors and the approach Fox and Miller-Idriss argue for is that it allows an understanding of 'when' and 'how' ordinary people invoke and encounter the nation, and what 'diverse phenomena' of daily life are 'framed' in national terms (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 540). Furthermore, a research approach that gathers qualitative data from research participants would enable subjects to articulate their own experiences of the nation and of their nationality, focusing the attention onto how subjects understand and construct their national "identity."

This is what the study of national identity by Wodak et al. (2009) has accomplished. Their research employs Critical Discourse Analysis in order to study the discursive construction of national identity in Austria. Their investigation conceptualises identity not as something static and unchanging, but as an 'element situated in the flow of time, ever changing, something involved in a process' (Wodak et al., 2009: 11). National identity is 'a complex of common or similar beliefs or opinions internalised in

the course of socialisation', and is shaped by 'state, political, institutional, media and everyday social practices, and the material and social conditions which emerge as their results, to which the individual is subjected' (Wodak et al., 2009: 28-29). A particularly insightful aspect of this research is its study of how discursive material from political elites and the media, and the kind of images and ideas that they invoke, are negotiated with, recontextualised and constructed by ordinary people in an interview and focus-group setting (Wodak et al., 2009: 107; 187-189). This research gives insight into the discursive production of the Austrian nation, and how the meaning of important concepts such as the 'nation' is made sense of by research participants. Thus the research shows how participants talk about certain themes such as linguistic sameness and difference with other nations; constructions of a common past, present and future; common territory and culture; and a 'national character' or a '*homo Austriacus'* (Wodak et al., 2009: 188-189). This work emphasises that "national identities," in their construction by individuals, are highly diverse, ambivalent and context-determined, influenced by a range of factors such as political affiliation and regional origin (Wodak et al., 2009: 188-189).

This interrelationship between what Wodak et al. describe as *Staatsnation* and *Kulturnation* also highlights different ways that nations can be conceptualised by its denizens. Their research delivers fascinating insights into the relationship between state-based and culture-based national identities (2009: 4-5). This element of the study brings out an important feature of nationhood, that is, the potential for nationality to be defined in terms of citizenship and in reference to the achievements and characteristics of the state, and/or in terms of culture, language or some other perceived characteristic. It explores state-centric understandings of national identity, but also culture-centric conceptualisations. This opens up the possibility of analysing a range of national contexts, especially sub-state or non-state nations that exist without the legal, administrative or governmental institutions of the state, or that exist within a wider state[15]. Wodak et al. here put the attention on how the people themselves interpret and conceptualise the nation through examining how themes such as 'the

[15] Any analysis of Welsh national identities will have to engage with the potentially multi-level nature of national identification, and the internalisation of discourses that draw on different notions of what constitutes "the nation."

concept of the nation' and 'the *homo nationalis*' are discursively reproduced (2009: 4-5). Wodak et al. demonstrate, therefore, that it is possible to explore how nations themselves are discursive produced.

A further approach to national identity has come from David McCrone and Frank Bechhofer, whose important book *Understanding National Identity* (2015) is the culmination of decades of conceptual and methodological studies of national identity. Their own way of conceptualising national identity so as to avoid the problematic and ambiguous implications of this concept sees them focusing on identity as an 'active process of doing', an active national identification, which overcomes the implication of identity as a badge that affixes people (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 17). They utilise work by Brubaker and Cooper who have proposed the use of "identification" over identity, as it overcomes its 'reifying' connotations. Identification means to 'characterize oneself, to locate oneself vis-a-vis known others, to situate oneself in a narrative, to place oneself in a category … in any number of different contexts' (2000: 14). Identification also involves a multifaceted process of self-identification, and the identification or categorisation by others (2000: 14-15). Identification is an active and processual term 'derived from verbs, and calling to mind particular acts of identification and categorization performed by particular identifiers and categorizers' (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000: 17).

Using this approach, McCrone and Bechhofer (2015) aim to demonstrate, through empirical research conducted on the Scottish-English border, that national identity is both accessible and knowable and that national identity can be 'got at' through a range of imaginative research designs (Ichijo et al., 2017: 453). They used intensive interviews, surveys and ethnography to attempt to triangulate their attempts to 'get at' national identity (see Chapter Two in McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: Ichijo et al., 2017: 454). Their work, which derives from the general framework of symbolic interactionism, focuses on the performative and presentational aspects of identity (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 25). It draws on an understanding of social identity as a 'tactical issue involving claims, how these are received, and how identity characteristics are attributed to actors on the basis of what the audience receives and interprets' (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 25). Their approach shares similarities with a

discursive approach to studying national identity, in that they 'acknowledge that social and cultural talk in society at large … is important in framing how social actors define and employ national identity' (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 24). Where they differ is in their greater emphasis on the 'face value' of national identity claims; that is, an emphasis on the performed and presented claims, expressed in people's own terms, on which people wish to be judged (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 24-26). As such, this affords their understanding of national identity a high degree of agency:

> We see social identity in general, of which national identity is one form, as something of a hinge between social structure and action. Social structure constrains but does not determine how people behave, yet social action is not entirely a free will. (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 26)

McCrone and Bechhofer have shown with their research that identity as a 'verb', as an 'active process of doing', is 'eminently observable' and 'located in the context-specific and explicit practices of ordinary people' (Ichijo et al., 2017: 444). They attempted to move away from a notion of identity as a noun, agreeing with Brubaker and Cooper's assertion that 'identity' is a 'reifying' concept, and that 'identification' overcomes the ambiguity of the notion of identity (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000: 14; 34, McCrone and Bechhofer, 2015: 17). Their work, then, has sought to overcome the problematic nature of identity by refining and limiting its conceptualisation to an act of doing.

However, Fox has since argued that McCrone and Bechhofer's work has in fact effectively shown *latent* national identity, or 'identity-as-being' (Ichijo et al., 2017: 444). Fox points out that McCrone and Bechhofer's 'scepticism towards identity-as-being is fuelled partly by pragmatic concerns (because they want to access and know identity), but also partly by conceptual considerations (because they believe identities are made explicit through their everyday invocations and performances)' (Ichijo et al., 2017: 444). Yet Fox argues that the work done by McCrone and Bechhofer has shown *latent* national identity through their analysis of the 'rules and grammar' of national identity (Ichijo et al., 2017: 445; McCrone and Bechhofer, 2015: 30; 98; 115-116). Fox argues that a 'backstage version of identity' or 'background expectancies' can be glimpsed in McCrone and Bechhofer's text in instances when national identities are

challenged or transgressed in some ways, showing implicit rules and norms (Ichijo et al., 2017: 446).

This aspect of McCrone and Bechhofer's work builds upon previous work done on the 'identity rules' that shape how people understand their own nationality, how they attribute identity markers to others, and how they receive the identity claims of others (Kiely et al., 2001: 34; Kiely et al., 2005). Kiely et al. (2001), through qualitative data collected on national identity markers in Scotland, were able to draw up a number of probabilistic 'rules' that structure how people in Scotland make claims to identity. They demonstrate that 'cultural markers symbolically construct the boundaries that define or delimit different groups' (Kiely et al, 2001: 52). Developing this approach, McCrone and Bechhofer explore identity *markers* – the 'criteria people use to make judgements about their own national identity and that of others' and the rules, which 'seem to govern how markers are used' (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 30).

Fox argues that the rules, grammar and norms of national identity denote something of an underlying national identity:

> This is national identity not as a claim or performance, not strategically deployed, nor creatively manipulated; this is national identity as an unselfconscious set of nationally specific norms, values and understandings that underlies and informs social life without (usually) being talked about in a self-conscious manner. (Ichijo et al., 2017: 445)

While Fox is concerned with accounting for the apparent consistency in people's values and their understanding of their national life, the notion of latency nonetheless has problematic connotations of fixity. It invokes a notion of identity as static and essential. While rules and norms are an invaluable contribution to the study of how individuals make sense of their national existence – as they provide great insight into how discursive meaning is structured and subject to a kind of social regulation – great care must be taken to avoid connotations of essentialism and fixity. Indeed McCrone and Bechhofer themselves cast doubt as to the capacity of their approach to address latent or un-selfconscious aspects of national identity (Ichijo et al., 2017: 456). This

has much to do with the methodological issues that they perceive to arise when attempting to uncover more latent forms of identity (Ichijo et al., 2017: 456). 'Getting at' the more un-selfconscious or latent aspects of identity is problematic (Ichijo et al., 2017: 456).

A further valuable contribution by McCrone and Bechhofer is the focus of their work on sub-state nations within a wider nation-state context, which makes their research applicable to a wide range of national contexts. Much of their work centres on Scotland, England and the British nation-state, and the politics of national identity within and between them (Kiely et al., 2001; Kiely et al., 2005; McCrone and Bechhofer, 2015). The focus on national identity within a sub-state national context adds additional layers of insight into the process of identification, as people identify with different and multiple national constructs in complex ways. Thus McCrone and Bechhofer state that binary divides between 'Scottish' and 'British' do not 'reflect the nuanced realities in which people live their lives' (2015: 186). Instead, the national categories that people identify with are shaped by, and derive from political and cultural debates (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 186). Indeed such a focus on the sub-state nation demonstrates the necessity for any concept of the national self to be able to account for the complex and multi-level nature of identification with nations.

Challenging "National Identity?"

To summarise the above, identity and national identity as concepts cause conceptual and methodological issues due to the ambiguity of the term identity, and the sheer breadth of conceptual positions that this term has been used to describe. While some effective explorations of the 'national self' have been conducted, their success is due in part to their having bracketed off a particular conception of national identity, refining and limiting the scope and use of the term. It is in spite of, and not because of the concept of identity, that that these studies have managed to provide some insights into the national self.

Some of the approaches above, then, have studied different and distinct processes and elements that are often described under the umbrella-term of identity. As Billig suggested was necessary, these approaches above dispersed the concept of identity into different elements (Billig, 2014: 60). Thus some valuable research has been carried out into the discursive production of the national self, which takes into account the role of banal and everyday flagging of the nation, and the individual's capacity to negotiate with and recontextualise the discursive material they encounter. Furthermore, some insights have been provided into the active articulation of identities by research participants, and how such identifications involve a negotiation with rules and norms through which people make sense of identity claims and their own national self-understanding. These approaches demonstrate conceptually and methodologically that elements of the national self can be identified and studied.

However, this thesis argues that the concept of "national identity" should be challenged. As was stated in the introduction, the call to relegate the notion of "national identity" is driven by a dissatisfaction with the concept. This is because of its breadth and vagueness, and the problematic connotations and narratives that come with its use. A problem with the existing literature is that in writing about "national identity," the authors cling to a concept which is extraordinarily vague, broad and imprecise. The most successful studies above, instead of challenging this concept, have narrowed its meaning, and have interpreted and articulated it through a certain postmodern or constructivist lens. While they have situated themselves within a particular theoretical conceptualisation of, or approach to "national identity," they still have to contend with the enormity of this concept, the problematic connotations that it embodies and invokes, and the imprecision as to what it refers to. This raises a question as to the possibility dislodging the concept of "national identity" or "identity." How else can a phenomenon and entity such as the national self be conceptualised?

This thesis proposes a subjectivity-discourse approach as an answer. The thesis is also driven to challenge "national identity" because of the exciting possibilities that arise with the application of certain poststructuralist theories to studying a phenomenon such as the national self. Thus this thesis argues that it is possible and necessary to go

a step further that simply bracketing off a particular conceptualisation of "national identity" and to dislodge the concept in favour of an explanatory framework which *starts* from, and emphasises a certain understanding of the national self which rejects notions of latency, fixity and permanence. Instead of starting with a concept with such breadth, narrowing it down, and dismissing certain ways that it is interpreted and used, it is better to start from the ground up, and situate the national self within a conceptual understanding and theoretical tradition which refines it to a number of characteristics. This thesis approaches the national self from a particular poststructuralist perspective, and as a result, it argues that what is needed is a notion of the national self that is built around a conceptualisation of how the individual is produced as a national subject through interaction and creative negotiation with discursive meaning.

However, a question that must be address is the extent to which the concept of "identity" *can* be relegated from its hegemonic position. While an aim of this thesis is to provide a conceptual and theoretical framework that overcomes the issues relating to the notion of identity, this term nonetheless remains hegemonic in academic and popular discourse (Malešević, 2006: 34). Despite, and because of, its conceptual ambiguity, the notion of identity will nevertheless be used widely throughout society, as it continues to be an integral and widely understood (if only superficially) concept through which people express their social existence. For example, in the field work carried out for this thesis, identity and national identity were the *de facto* terms through which the participants expressed themselves and their relationship to the nation. Despite the insufficiency of these concepts, they remain the terms through which the majority of people narrate their social existence.

While a term like identity is a hegemonic concept in popular discourse, Brubaker and Cooper argue that it is not necessary for its analysis by the researcher to reinforce or reify its usage (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 5). They distinguish between 'categories of practice' used in everyday speech by the layman, and 'categories of analysis' used by researchers and analysts, and argue that the salience of a category of practice 'does not require its use as a category of analysis' (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 5). They argue that it is better to explain the processes and mechanisms of what is referred to as

"identity" and to 'avoid unintentionally reproducing or reinforcing such reification by unnecessarily adopting categories of practice as categories of analysis' (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 5). Therefore, while the subjectivity-discourse framework that this thesis develops cannot simply ignore "identity" – as when people claim an identity, they are doing or expressing *something* – it will attempt to go beyond it and provide a conceptual framework which focuses on a more limited notion of the national self.

How, then, are statements of identity to be situated within the subjectivity-discourse framework? In the subjectivity-discourse approach that this thesis will set out, "identity" can be understood in a limited way as the result of an act in which the individual labels themselves, and fixes themselves (temporarily) into an identifiable social category. A number of authors who write about identity *and* subjectivity describe the former as a kind of fixing of the subject (if only temporarily) into an identifiable social position, or the identification by a subject with a particular social position (Weedon, 2004: 19; Atkinson, 2002: 97). Identity has also been described as a kind of 'doing'; a 'project', a 'longing' and a 'claiming' that is practiced by the individual (Connell, 1987 in Burck, 2005: 22). This subjectivity-discourse approach takes the conceptual and theoretical weight off the notion of identity, situating it as a performative act, a claim in which an individual labels themselves, so as to be recognisable and intelligible to those around them. What must be considered is that such an act says little about how the individual understands this label, how they discursively conceptualise that which they identify with, and how others interpret this expression of an identity. The claiming of a national identity, then, can be conceptualised as the tip of the ice-berg; it is but one element of more complex operations by which the individual is formed and exists as a national subject.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a critique and review of how the nation, nationalism and national identity are studied by the existing literature. It has reviewed the literature on nations and nationalism, and has examined the insufficiency of the attention paid

to national identity or the 'inner world' of the national denizen. An appraisal of the literature on national identity has also demonstrated that, while some studies have made in-roads into studying the phenomenon of a national self, their continuing use of the vague and overburdened term "national identity" ties them to a conceptual category which problematically encompasses many meanings, theoretical conceptualisations and approaches, and which refers to a variety of different and unspecified aspects of the self that come under this umbrella term. This chapter has argued that while some valuable work has been done by a number of authors who study national identity, it is in spite of the concept of identity and not because of it that they have been able to provide insights into some aspects of the national self. They also reinforce the hegemony of the concept of "national identity."

This chapter, then, has examined and critiqued the notion of "national identity," and has argued that due to its insufficiency, that there is a need for a theoretical framework with can supplant this problematic concept with a more nuanced and dynamic theoretical framework for conceptualising the national self. In the next chapter, this thesis will advance a theoretical framework built around the concept of national subjectivity that enables a theoretical understanding of some key aspects of the formation of the individual as a national subject, the nature of national subjectivity, and its normative and ethical implications.

Chapter Two – Theoretical Framework

Introduction

This chapter will set out the theoretical framework through which the national self will be studied. This thesis argues that in bringing together work by Michel Foucault and the Essex School of Discourse Theory, a more suitable theoretical framework can be provided for the study and conceptualisation of the national self than is offered by the concept of "national identity." The theoretical framework will centre on the notion of *national subjectivity*. It will draw on conceptualisations of discourse and subjectivity by these authors so as to elaborate an understanding of national subjectivity. This, the thesis argues, provides a more nuanced, comprehensive and sensitive approach to studying the part of the self which is shaped by the nation and the individual's relationship to it.

In this chapter, the theoretical framework will be outlined, and will be presented in two interrelated sections which represent two new areas of insight into the national subject. The first section is concerned with explaining, using certain notions of discourse and subjectivity, how the formation of the national subject is conceptualised, and it will examine what can be said about the nature of the national subject. It will be argued that this subjectivity-discourse approach can provide considerable insights into the nature of the national subject, that is, the processes and operations through which an individual becomes a national subject, and the nature and characteristics of a national subjectivity. What the section will examine in detail is how the national subject is both constituted by discourse, but also, owing to the nature of discourse, how the individual can exercise agency in their own self-formation as a national subject. Therefore, this provides a comprehensive account of how the individual becomes and exists as a national subject.

The second section is concerned with teasing out the ethical and normative implications and dimensions of the national subject. The subjectivity-discourse approach enables an exploration of this underexplored dimension of national

subjectivity. The work of Foucault and the Discourse Theorists enables a conceptualisation of the national subject as an entity that is produced in relation to normative and ethical schemata. This section, then, in outlining the theoretical framework through which the national self is conceptualised, will explain that the national subject's articulation and understanding of how the world 'is' conveys a normative interpretation, such that being constituted as a national subject means constituting oneself in relation to ethical norms, structures or schemata which can shape values, worldviews and conduct. This provides a more comprehensive account of the national subject, because as well as exploring how an individual comes to understand themselves in relation to a particular social subjectivity, it also stipulates that this is not a neutral process, and that being constituted as a national subject has implications for how the individual assesses, interprets and relates to their social surroundings.

National Subjectivity

The previous chapter demonstrated some of the conceptual issues that are associated with the concept of "identity" and "national identity." While some of the more valuable studies of "national identity" have articulated this concept through constructivist or postmodern ideas, and have therefore made some in-roads into a more sophisticated and nuanced conceptualisation of the national self, their continuing usage of "national identity" ties them to a wide-ranging, connotation-laden and imprecise concept which covers too much ground to be theoretically useful. In constructing a more appropriate conceptual framework for understanding the national self, this thesis turns to Michel Foucault and the Essex School of Discourse Theory.

Foucault and the Discourse Theorists have developed broadly poststructuralist understandings of the subject, discourse and ethics, and have contributed valuable ideas and theories that can provide great insights into the discursive nature of social existence, and into the nature of subjectivity. The poststructuralist tradition within

which they are usually situated[1] addresses many of the pitfalls and problems of "identity." This approach puts forth a view of the self that is sufficiently complex, nuanced and fluid so as to be able to account for the messy, multi-faceted, and fleeting nature of the self and what are referred to as social "identities." An essentialist notion of identity is rejected. For example, Hall described identity, in the sense of a fixed, secure and coherent understanding of the self, as a fantasy (Hall, 1992: 598), adding that 'if we feel we have a unified identity from birth to death, it is only because we construct a comforting story or "narrative of the self" about ourselves' (Hall, 1992: 598). This approach emphasises subjectivity as something that is fleeting, shifting, fluid and continually reiterated and reproduced (Hall, 1992: 598; Butler, 1993: 94-95; 226). Furthermore, poststructuralist literature also rejects the idea that the subject is the source of their own meaning, although the extent to which agency can be exercised by the subject in their own self-formation is a significant concern of the framework this thesis advances. In this approach "identity" becomes less of an essential and intrinsic quality of the individual, and more of a socially produced position that the individual temporarily occupies.

Foucault and the Essex School of Discourse Theory provide the framework for this thesis because their work, especially when taken together, enables a sophisticated and nuanced account of discourse, the subject and ethics, including: how subjects are formed by power and truth, and hegemonic relations between discursive meanings; how discourse "operates;" how subjects are able to exercise agency and freedom in their self-construction as subjects; and how subjectivities are caught up in the regulation and government of individuals, and can shape their ethical existence. Their work enables a theoretical framework which elaborates a concept of *national subjectivity*. The theoretical framework covers two interrelated new areas of insight into the national subject; two aspects which these theoretical perspectives illuminate and explain.

[1] There is debate as to whether of Foucault was a structuralist or a post-structuralist. Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983: xi-xii) state that Foucault agreed with them that he had never been a structuralist, but they argue that he had been tempted and influenced by structuralism.

The following two aspects of the national self will be developed in this chapter. The first aspect of the national self that the theoretical framework provides new insights into relates to the formation and nature of the national subject. Foucault and the Discourse Theorists provide sophisticated theoretical insights into the nature of subjectivity and discourse, and their formation, operations, processes and implications. Foucault's work on the subject explains how individuals are produced as subjects through the operation of productive power and discursive "truth" (Foucault, 1982: 781; 1988: 18). He posited that individuals are produced as subjects by their entry into 'games of truth', and are therefore shaped by the circulation of power and knowledge through society (Foucault, 1980). This work situates the subject as the effect of knowledge or 'regimes of truth' that exercise a productive power through delimiting social reality and what can be considered 'truth'. Laclau and Mouffe supplement this theory of discourse with a valuable account of how discursive meaning and the articulation of nodal points compete for conceptual hegemony in the articulation of society, thus elaborating a theory of relative power relations between discourses (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). However, the most valuable contribution by the Discourse Theorists is their sophisticated and detailed account of the very nature of discourse. It provides a nuanced explanation of how and why agency can be exercised by individuals in the formation of a subjectivity. While Foucault was also concerned with the agency of the subject and 'technologies of the self' (Foucault, 1988: 18), Discourse Theory's description of discourse as empty and therefore unfixed and 'always already dislocated' accounts for a degree of freedom in how subjects are able to articulate their social "identities" (Critchley & Marchart, 2004; Laclau, 1990: 39). This unfixity and the need for continual rearticulation of one's subjectivity provides room for creative negotiation in its construction. Therefore, the work of these theorists explain how the national subject is the product of competing discourses which shape the regimes of truth through which society is made intelligible, but also how the unstable and unfixed nature of discourse, and the fleeting and shifting nature of subjectivity results in the capacity for agency.

The second aspect of the national self that the theoretical framework provides new insights into relates to the ethical and normative dimensions and implications of a

national subjectivity. This aspect relates to how national subjects, through their very production due to negotiation with discursive meaning, navigate and internalise ethical and normative schemata. In Foucault's work in particular, insight is given into the ethical dimensions of power, knowledge and subjectivities (Foucault, 1984a; 1984b). Foucault developed a theoretical approach to studying the government and regulation of populations and individuals through the exercising of regulatory or governmental power over how subjects are constituted (Foucault, 2007; 2008). Additionally, in exploring ethics and moral codes of behaviour, he explored how the subject is subjected to discursive normalisation, prohibitions and codes of conduct, and thus how normative power is exercised by the individual upon their own subjectivity and conduct (Foucault, 1981; 1990). Subjects, in forming themselves, negotiate with discursive norms and ethical codes that establish normal, acceptable and desirable conduct alongside the abnormal and problematised. This conceptualisation of ethics opens up new avenues through which to explore the national self. A national "identity" can be seen as more than a neutral label, and one's formation as a national subject can be understood to have an ethical and normative dimension, such that one's interaction with discourse shapes one's understanding of how the world 'is', which reinforces and draws upon certain normative and ethical positions and outlooks. This chapter now turns to examine these two areas or aspects of the national self in more detail.

The Formation and Nature of the National Subject: Discourse, Subjectivity and Agency

The first aspect of the national self that the theoretical framework provides new insights into is the formation and nature of the national subject. The work of Foucault and the Essex School of Discourse Theory enables a deeper understanding of how and why the individual becomes constituted as a national subject, and how a national subjectivity is maintained and experienced.

The Production of the Subject

The individual is produced as a national subject through their interaction and negotiation with discourse. The conditions of possibility for subjectivities within society are largely determined by the discourses that constitute social reality, and make it intelligible. Central to understanding subjectivities and subject positions within society is power; specifically, power as the capacity of discourse to produce social reality and the subjects that inhabit it. Foucault identified two "technologies" through which individuals are made subjects: 'technologies of power', and 'technologies of the self' (Foucault, 1988: 18). These technologies were the means through which subjects are both constituted by others, by the discursive world in which they live, and through a process of self-formation. Before turning his attention to 'technologies of the self', which will be addressed below, Foucault spent the earlier parts of his work exploring the 'technologies of power' that objectivise the subject, and 'determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination' (Foucault, 1988: 18). In short, he explored how it is that individuals are formed as subjects, and how they enter into 'games of truth', or specific power relations, that produce them in certain forms (Foucault, 1997: 289).

Foucault, moving away from a narrower concern with disciplinary power[2] in his earlier work, emphasised the *productive* nature of power (Simons, 1995: 33, Foucault, 1980: 93-94). This radical notion of power sees it not as a kind of domination wielded by individuals or groups, nor a position or legal right to be held. Power is not a force that is determined through the capacity to repress (Foucault, 1980: 89). Rather, power is exercised through the *production* of knowledge and currents of truth within society. Society and the social body is permeated, characterised and constituted by relations of power (Foucault, 1980: 93). Power is thus exercised through the production of discourses of truth, and truth – being the knowledge through which the world is made

[2] In his earlier work, Foucault focused on how individuals are formed through a kind of disciplinary power, which through institutional observation and examination, produces individuals as criminals or insane through a normalising judgement, generated by scientific discourses (Foucault, 1979: 170). This emphasised a framework of exclusion and confinement whereby bodies were acted upon, and turned into objects of knowledge (Foucault, 1979: 28).

intelligible – exercises power over how social reality is conceptualised and understood (Foucault, 1980: 93).

Foucault therefore came to study how it was that subjects are produced through discourse, and also how individuals produce themselves as subjects:

> This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word "subject": subject to someone else by control and dependence; and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to. (Foucault, 1982: 781)

While the subject has the capacity to affect their self-formation, it is constituted by a discursive power which delimits the 'conditions of possibility' for subjectivities (Simmons, 1995: 30).

Building upon the work of Foucault, Laclau and Mouffe introduced the notion of hegemony to the understanding of discursive meaning and the power relations between them. Clarifying some ambiguity in Foucault[3], Laclau and Mouffe stress that *everything* is discursive; there are no non-discursive events or practices (1985: 107). Their 1985 text *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* presented their conception of society as a discursive space, where discourse is taken as coextensive with society (Torfing, 1999: 290-291; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: x). They argue that identities, meanings and social structures are determined through discursive constructions, and are subject to power relations between different discursive articulations which aim to 'naturalize' and make objective certain social formations and identities (Torfing, 1999: 290-291). This means that subjectivities are always produced through discourse, in that what is intelligible is discursively produced.

[3] Foucault's work sometime implies that there is a difference between the discursive and non-discursive (Sjölander, 2011: 27). Laclau and Mouffe clarify this ambiguity.

Laclau and Mouffe similarly put forth an understanding of the subject in which subjectivities are produced, in part, by the constellation of discourses that make social reality intelligible. Individuals find themselves "thrown" into structural positions, such as their class, nationality, race and sex, however these do not presuppose an essential subject (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 115). Instead, the individual's understanding of their structural position is mediated by the interpretative framework of discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 115). An individual's sense of their subject position 'is shaped not by the mere fact of the structural positions themselves, but by the subject positions through which [they] live their structural positions' (Smith, 1998: 57-58).

A national subject, then, is a subjectivity that the individual constructs and occupies in relation to the 'regimes of truth' or discursive frameworks that are found within society. The nation and the nation-state especially are hegemonic concepts that organise the globe into distinct national units. This categorisation of the population is a 'regime of truth' – legitimate and accepted knowledge – which exercises power through delimiting social reality in this way, and which conversely maintains its conceptual hegemony through the exercise of power over social reality. Nations are produced as objects of this discourse. Individuals, then, are produced as national subjects through the exercise of power by this 'regime of truth' over social reality, by their entry into a form of power which subjects them to this 'truth'. Additionally, within nations, multiple notions of the nation and of nationness vie for conceptual hegemony. This means that multiple national subjectivities are possible within the same nation, and the individual can be constituted in relation to numerous discursive representations of that nation. One's national self, then, must be considered as the product of discourse, and as the result of the individual's subjection to certain regimes of truth or discursive frameworks which make social reality intelligible and which shape it in particular ways.

Laclau and Mouffe provide considerable insight into how discourses operate in the construction of social reality, but also, importantly, how these discursive frameworks and meanings can be both made hegemonic and challenged by competing articulations of social reality. This is important because, in situating subjects as discursively produced, there needs to be recourse to explain how the discursive

landscape itself is formed and reformed. As Smith explains, subject positions within any given society are 'shaped by the power relations that structure a given political terrain' (Smith, 1998: 64). In other words, subject positions and subjectivities are greatly shaped by the struggle for discursive hegemony in society, and the 'struggle to provide compelling frameworks through which structural positions are lived' (Smith, 1998: 71). In relation to the nation, this means that different articulations of the nation compete for hegemony in how the nation is meaningfully understood.

The notion of hegemony is integral to Laclau and Mouffe's understanding of discourse. They synthesise this concept, developed by Gramsci, with a study of discourse. Hegemony is 'a more sensitive and therefore useful critical term than 'domination', which fails to acknowledge the active role of subordinate people in the operation of power' (Jones, 2006: 41). For Gramsci, hegemony entails having a particular worldview, idea(l), or set of values reach the level of 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1971: 419), that is, an 'uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become "common"…' (Hoare & Nowell-Smith, 1971: 322). Gramsci was interested in how hegemony was achieved through the *consent* of the governed, and developed great insight into how the battle for political and moral leadership was fought over the realm of ideas and culture, and the sphere of civil society (Buttigieg, 1995: 6-7).

Laclau and Mouffe developed upon this notion of hegemony. They have created a notion of discourse upon which is 'grafted' the concept of hegemony (Howarth, 2015: 200). The battle for hegemony takes place between interpretative frameworks – discourses through which phenomena are articulated – as they vie for conceptual hegemony. All discourses are caught up in hegemonic power relations. Hegemonic power therefore represents the 'dominant form of … meaning within a given social order' (Sutherland, 2005: 196). A hegemonic discourse, and indeed discourses themselves, however, are never static. Discourse Theorists 'paint a picture of societies periodically reformed by a hegemonic rearticulation of the dominant discourse' (Sutherland, 2005: 185). This is possible because the relationship between hegemony and discourse is one of mutual conditioning, meaning that hegemonic practices – such as articulations that unify meanings around 'nodal points' or establish a relation

between discursive elements – shape and reshape discourse, which conversely 'provides the conditions of possibility for hegemonic articulation' (Torfing, 1999: 43, Torfing, 2005: 15).

The significance of this notion of hegemony and discourse is that there is a clear recourse to explain how different and antagonistic social forces battle for hegemony in how certain elements or "nodal points," such as the nation, a national language or ethnicity, are discursively articulated (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 112; Torfing, 1999: 98. The Discourse Theory approach thus argues that identities, subject positions and subjectivities are subject to the power relations between different discursive articulations of various signifiers. Importantly, then, the subject positions available to individuals depend upon the constellation of discourses that, through vying for hegemony in articulating the social world, have come to shape the discursive landscape, or 'horizons of intelligibility', through which the social world is made intelligible (Smith, 1998: 64). Therefore, while individuals are not sutured to their structural positions and are able to call upon discursive frames of interpretation in how they position their subjectivity, this subjectivity is nonetheless shaped by the discursive landscape of a given social context. The interpretative frameworks that are called upon at any moment by a subject are shaped by the struggles between discourses to become dominant, and different configurations of discourses are found at different historical moments (Smith, 1998: 57-58).

This concept of discursive hegemony is particularly valuable for the analysis of the relationship between discourse and the subject. Whereas discourse as a concept can appear nebulous, hegemony 'brings us from the undecidable level of non-totalizable openness to a decidable level of discourse' (Torfing, 1999: 102). Hegemony describes the relative "fixity" of a discursive articulation, whereby a discourse achieves the level of 'objective' truth. Different discursive articulations compete for this hegemonic position, obscuring the contingency of their particular meanings (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002: 37). Different articulations of the nation, then, compete for this hegemony, and attempt to "fix" the nodal point 'nation'. The specific meanings that are consumed and negotiated within the formation of national subjectivities depend upon the power relations between various hegemonic projects that articulate certain signifiers. The

possible “national” subject positions that are found within a particular social context, then, are the result of hegemonic struggles.

But who is competing for hegemony? And how are discourses bounded and counter-posed in a struggle for hegemony? Laclau and Mouffe provide a theoretical understanding for how different articulations of meaning within society become opposed sets of forces. Whereas Gramsci saw the struggle over hegemony to involve the attempted formation of historic blocs – alliances between classes, acting politically in congruence around certain hegemonic worldviews or ideas – Discourse Theorists have expressed the struggle between different hegemonic discourses in terms of social antagonism, dislocation, and the antagonistic blocking of identity (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 129; Žižek, 1990; 251-254). Hegemonic blocs are ‘fashioned by the construction of social antagonisms among differently positioned agents, and the drawing of political frontiers that divide the social into opposed sets of forces’ (Howarth, 2015: 200). A hegemonic project can be understood, then, as ‘a political space relatively unified through nodal points and tendentially relational identities’ (Laclau and Mouffe in Sutherland, 2005: 195). Antagonism is a consequence of attempting to close or fix the meaning of a nodal point such as the nation, as there exist frictions between different discourses. Indeed Torfing states that the attempt to ‘represent the unity of society always tends to reveal conflicts and antagonisms’ (1999: 193). This results in an identity crisis (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 126; Sutherland, 2005: 194). A crisis occurs when a hegemonic discourse blocks people from what they believe to be their true selves (Smith, 1998: 165). Thus ‘social antagonisms occur because social agents are prevented from attaining their identities (and attendant interest) by an ‘enemy’ who is deemed responsible for this ‘failure’ (Howarth, 2004: 260).

A discourse of the nation, that is, a particular articulation or meaning of the nation, in attempting to achieve a level of common sense objectivity, results in friction with other social groups that see their own identities or their own understandings of the nation blocked or challenged. An antagonistic relationship forms between competing discourses, with an alternative discourse challenging a hegemonic discursive articulation which is attempting to maintain its conceptual hegemony. Antagonisms,

and therefore social cleavages, will occur wherever a compelling challenge is formed by social groups blocked by particular hegemonies. It is not only meanings for singular national constructs that are fought over. Sutherland writes that sub-state nations and nationalism can challenge nation-states for conceptual hegemony over the nodal point of 'nation', and to be the 'national' referent (2005: 195). Nationness and national subjectivity in a particular territory, or even within a particular community, can be shaped by not only multiple articulations of the nation-state, but by competing national constructs. Thus the hegemonic position of the nation-state can be challenged by sub-state nationalism, diasporic immigrant national identifications, or even more global trans-national subjectivities. Therefore, the meaning of "the nation" or "nationness" for people in a given territory can be the site of hegemonic challenges. Different articulations can seek to give meaning to this empty nodal point and referent of "the nation."

Agency and Subjectivity

It was argued above that subjectivities are shaped to a large extent by the constellation of discourses that produce and reproduce social reality. But the notion of national subjectivity put forth by this framework also accounts for a degree of agency through which individuals can affect their self-understanding and self-construction. Indeed the relationship between the limitation of the discursive and the agency of the individual is crucial to understanding the nature of national subjectivity. This is because it explores, on the one hand, the relative fixity and consistency of national subjectivities and the compelling nature of discourses of the nation, while on the other hand, it accounts for the agency, the degree of freedom, and the capacity for self-formation that individuals have to creatively negotiate with discursive norms, and to express multiple, conflicting and shifting subjectivities. In other words, national subjects are both passive bearers and active creators (Olssen, 2014: 34).

In his later work, Foucault developed an interest in the struggle against the individualisation of subjects by the state and argued for the promotion of new forms of subjectivities (Foucault, 1982: 785). He became interested in agency, freedom and

'technologies of the *self*'; that is, practices and techniques 'which permit individuals to effect … a number of operations on their bodies and souls, thoughts, conducts, and the way of being, so as to transform themselves' (Foucault, 1988: 18). The importance of this notion is that it explains that subjects can exercise power over themselves; that they subject *themselves* to certain subject positions (Foucault, 1982: 778), and that, ultimately, they can exercise a degree of agency over their sense of self. Subjects are still limited by what is made intelligible, but they are not sutured to absolute subject positions. This aspect of subjectivity is most insightful for analysing how subjects form *themselves* in a particular manner in areas or situations of multiple possible subjectivities and competing discourses. Subjects themselves can exercise agency in how they manoeuvre through fields of meaning.

A number of Discourse Theorists have, through elaborating a sophisticated and detailed theory of discourse, provided a nuanced explanation of how and why agency can be exercised by individuals in the formation of a subjectivity. Laclau's later work provides an account of agency through its particular understanding of discourse. The emphasising of the 'emptiness' of significant signifiers gives recourse to explaining *how* subjects are able to negotiate with several different interpretations of the same 'empty' signifier (Torfing, 1999: 98-99). Initially, Laclau and Mouffe described a process whereby competing discourses attempt to fix the meaning of 'nodal points' and 'floating signifiers', that is, particularly open signs that discourses struggle over (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985: 112; see also Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002: 28-29). A dominant discourse then comes to (attempt to) fix the meaning of certain privileged discursive points, or discursive centres, known then as 'nodal points', creating a 'knot of definitive meanings' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1995: 112; Torfing, 1999: 98). This part of Laclau and Mouffe's theory was further refined in response to Žižek's assertion that a nodal point is *not* characterised by a richness of meaning. Instead, as Torfing explains, 'nodal points like 'God', 'Nation', 'Party' or 'Class' are not characterised by a supreme density of meaning, but rather by an emptying of their contents, which facilitates their structural role of unifying a discursive terrain' (1999: 98-99). What is being described, then, is an 'empty signifier', a 'pure signifier without a signified' (Torfing, 1999: 98-99). Therefore, by implication of their emptiness, empty signifiers, such as 'the nation',

provide a broad surface of inscription upon which many multiple meanings can be inscribed, and which can therefore be understood in a variety of different ways. By implication, subjectivities are potentially producible in relation to multiple competing meanings and articulations.

The implication for any hegemonic construct or articulation of the nation is that it is inherently "unfixed" and open to challenges and rearticulations. It is indeed this openness of the concept of the nation that gives it such power in the contemporary social imaginary; it can be fought over by parties that rearticulate it in wildly different ways:

> [A] wide range of persons and collectivities can identify themselves as constituent parts of it without having their readings and their allegiances to it challenged or denied by particular and exclusionary definitions. (Bowman, 1994: 144)

Torfing states that since the breakdown of absolute monarchies and the secularisation of society the embodiment of symbolic power in one body, that of the Prince, has been undermined, and as a result, the 'locus of power becomes an empty place,' a place that *cannot* be occupied (Torfing, 1999: 192). In its place, nationalism attempts to provide 'the empty signifiers of 'the nation' and 'the people' with a particular, substantial embodiment' (Torfing, 1999: 193). The nation 'provides a surface of inscription of social demands, hopes and aspirations', and provides the nation, this empty signifier, with a fullness that people can identify with (1999: 195). What defines the 'essence' of a people can be rearticulated and challenged, particular notions of good or bad conduct for nationals can be normalised, and the hopes and aspirations of various groups can be embodied by a hegemonic project. Thus the nation is, as Bowman describes, 'an imprecise and effective nebulous mythological concept which is, because of that imprecision, open to appropriation by all of its readers. In other words, the concept of the nation retains its grip on the imaginary of its population precisely by remaining unfixed' (1994: 144).

A further degree of freedom is accounted for by Laclau in later work. The instability and "un-fixability" of discourse (Laclau, 1990: 28) has significant implications for the

nature of social identities. This instability stems from Laclau and Mouffe's understanding of social antagonism. Laclau describes antagonism as the 'limit of all objectivity'; in other, words, antagonism between social formations challenges the capacity of a discourse to provide a closed and complete meaning (Laclau, 1990: 17). The existence of antagonistic forces is integral to how discursive meaning is constituted. Laclau writes that antagonism allows for the concept of a 'constitutive outside', which has a dual function in that it both blocks and makes impossible the closure of the identity of the 'inside', while at the same time being the prerequisite for its constitution' (Laclau, 1990: 17). In other words, the constitutive outside, the 'other', is the referent against which the 'inside' is defined, while at the same time threatening the 'inside'. Thus any system of meaning 'relies upon a discursive exterior that partially constitutes it' (Howarth, 2004: 266). The concept of a constitutive outside is borrowed from the work of Derrida, whose work shows that 'an identity's constitution is always based on excluding something and establishing a violent hierarchy between two poles – … black/white, man/woman' (Laclau, 1990: 32). Thus there is always something external to a discourse which threatens it and reveals its contingency and precariousness, while revealing the boundaries and limits of an identity or social formation (Howarth, 2000: 105-106). In a later work by Laclau, social antagonism was replaced by a more primary category of 'dislocation', which refers to the fact that social formations are 'always already dislocated' (Critchley & Marchart, 2004: 6); they are dislocated because every identity depends on 'an outside which both denies that identity and provides its condition of possibility at the same time' (Laclau, 1990: 39).

Despite some ambiguity over the concept of dislocation[4], its introduction by Laclau (1990), as well as the concept of the constitutive outside, answered a criticism made by Žižek that the subjectivity in Laclau and Mouffe's work is passively constructed, with an identity conceived as an effect of structural positions (Critchley & Marchart, 2004: 5-6). The advancement of this aspect of Discourse Theory placed greater

[4] Both Staheli and Howarth have voiced concern over the concept of dislocation (Staheli, 2004: 234). Howarth has commented on the ambiguity over two potential meanings for dislocation as being on the one hand always already there, and on the other it being the result of something akin to an event (2004: 268).

emphasis on agency. Laclau answered this criticism through emphasising the dislocated nature of all social identities and positions. He thus asks:

> What happens if the structure I am determined by does not manage to constitute itself, if a radical outside … dislocates it? The structure will obviously not be able to determine me, not because I have an essence independent from the structure, but because the structure has failed to constitute itself fully and thus to constitute me as a subject as well … I am *condemned* to be free, not because I have no structural identity as the existentialists assert, but because I have a *failed* structural identity. This means that the subject is partially self-determined. (1990: 44)

The failure of a discourse to fully close or fix an identity condemns the individual to continually engage in identification. The subject and subjectivity is characterised by a 'lack', a concept taken from the work of Lacan (Laclau and Zac, 1994: 31-35). As discourse is always lacking, and is an absent, incomplete fullness, and as every signifier fails to represent the subject, the subject is never fully able to fix or finalize an identity (Laclau and Zac, 1994: 32). An identification will always ultimately fail to achieve a fully-fledged identity (Laclau and Zac, 1994: 35). The inability of discourse to ever fully complete or close the meaning of a nodal point, despite seductively promising the contrary, means that the subject is always a subject of lack, and identification is always incomplete (Smith, 1998: 76). The result is that the subject is 'caught in an endless and impossible search for completion and is thereby driven to perform an infinite series of identifications' (Smith, 1998: 76). Furthermore, subjectivities are fleeting and temporally specific, needing to be constituted and re-constituted as the context requires.

It is in this that Laclau finds the possibility for 'freedom'. Society is characterised by a paradox: 'freedom exists because society does not achieve constitution as a structural objective order; but any social action tends towards the construction of that impossible object' (Laclau, 1990: 44). Thus the subject always seeks the completion promised by discourse, but is condemned to be free by the impossibility of a fixed and complete identity. The apparent potential for discourse to fully fix and close meaning is integral to how struggles for hegemony operate. Torfing states that 'the operation

of closure is impossible but at the same time necessary; *impossible* because of the constitutive dislocation which lies in the heart of any structural arrangement, necessary, because without that fictitious fixing of meaning there would be no meaning at all' (Torfing, 1999: 114). In other words, the promise or fantasy of complete and full meaning is necessary for society to be able to constitute itself, despite the fact that all discourse is incomplete and decentred.

Nationalism and the nation provide excellent examples of the role of the constitutive other in the formation and dislocation of discourse. The emptiness of the nodal point 'nation' brings into sharp focus the role that the constitutive other must play in any attempt to fix its meaning. This outside can take many forms, from conceptual understandings of other nations against which one's own is compared and contrasted to notions of 'enemies of the nation', that can come from outside the nation or within, as either foreign threats to the nation's existence, identity and fulfilment, or internal threats to a particular identity and set of aspirations (Salecl, 1994: 211). The very existence of a particular national 'objectivity' is reliant upon an outside which both constitutes it, and at the same time challenges it. Thus Laclau gives the example of Edward Said's work, which captures this discursive process whereby the 'Other' plays an integral role in the construction and the articulation of the 'Self' (Laclau, 1990: 32). In her text on the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, Salecl (1994) has further elaborated the concept of Othering through a more Lacanian or psychoanalytical use of Discourse Theory. Salecl again describes the nation as an undefinable element that cannot be symbolised; an element which is always missing, always exceeding its grasp yet which is always being incorporated into the symbolic order (1994: 229). Salecl further describes that the 'Other' is always seen as a threat to 'our' existence, and that the nation is based on the fantasy of the enemy, whose threat takes on various forms, such as threatening to steal jobs, to eradicate culture, to take what is 'ours' (1994: 211). This antagonism, which is integral to the functioning of a discourse, is thus always present, and prevents a certain notion of the nation from being fully symbolised, producing a lack. The nation is thus a fantasy in which society perceives itself as homogenous (1994: 229).

The consequence of the emptiness, openness, instability and dislocation of any discourse of the nation is that individuals' subjectivities are never wholly fixed. They have a capacity to negotiate with various discursive meanings in how they come to understand their nationality and nationhood. Individuals are compelled towards identification and an attempt to fix their meaning by the seduction of the promise of a completed identity. The "lack" which subjects experience mean a constant identification with various subject positions, within which lies the possibility of rearticulation of one's subjectivity. As a result the subject positions occupied can be multiple, complex and possibly contradictory. Smith writes that 'political subjects may think one thing, state another, and act in yet another manner all together' (1998: 57-58). One's national subjectivity, then, is understood as a continual process of identification and re-articulation in relation to the discursive meanings to which one has access. And in times of 'greater structural indetermination', as Laclau put it (1990: 44), where previously settled or hegemonic identities and discourses are particularly uprooted by challenges to its hegemony, space opens up in which subjectivities can be open to significant flux. What the notion of subjectivity enables, then, is a sophisticated understanding of how and why subjects are able to exercise a degree of agency over their self-construction. The instability and "un-fixity" of a discourse and therefore of social identities compels the individual to continually re-iterate their social identities. This opens up the space for individuals' subjectivities to be potentially continually shifting and changing depending on context and situatedness.

What the above contributes to any exploration of the national self is a theoretical understanding of how individuals are formed as national subjects, and the nature of national subjectivity. It stipulates that subjects are the effect of a productive power exercised by regimes of truth, and are the products of a self-formation. A struggle for conceptual hegemony takes place whereby discourses compete for conceptual hegemony over the articulation of the social world. The discursive meaning through which a subject comes to understand the nation and their national selves is shaped by antagonistic power relations between discursive articulations of concepts such as 'nation' and 'nationality'. This is what accounts for the existence of relatively and seemingly coherent and identifiable discourses in society. However, the subject is

able to exercise a degree of agency in how they creatively negotiate with the discursive world around them, and therefore how they produce their national and other subjectivities. The theoretical framework posits that this freedom, and the fleeting and temporally specific nature of national subjectivities, are the consequence of the unfixity and emptiness of discourse. Thus subjectivities, and the discursive meaning through which they are constructed, can be shifting, multiple, and inconsistent.

Ethics and Subjectivity

This thesis is concerned with uncovering and exploring the ethical dimensions of national subjectivity. It argues that the individual's negotiation with discursive meaning in their self formation as a subject involves also negotiating with normative positions and ethical schemata which can shape the values and conducts of individuals. Subjects derive their values, moral expectations, judgements, and beliefs from their interaction with the discourses that constitute social reality. Social norms, moral codes and societal expectations are made a part of the self through the production and reproduction of subjectivities. These shape conduct, values and beliefs as the subject comes to live their life in relation to the discourses through which social reality is understood. One's ethical existence is formed and lived in relation to discourses that delimit what is acceptable and unacceptable, normal and abnormal, and what is desirable conduct and what is pathological. A national subjectivity, therefore, confers normative positions in that one's understanding of one's national context and national self draws upon, and reinforces discourses that have ethical implications.

Subjectivity and ethics became a significant concern for Foucault during a period in which he explored both a notion of power as a government of the population and individuals – which was encapsulated in his notion of governmentality (Foucault, 2007; 2008) – and also, through his study of sexuality, a productive notion of power which forms subjects through 'cultural normative practices and scientific discourses' (Oksala,

2014: 90). Both of these strands of Foucault's thought enable an exploration of the relationship between subjectivity and ethics. The former emerged from Foucault interest in power as government, and the rationalities, mentalities and techniques through which government is exercised. This study of governmentality developed into an analysis of rationalities and techniques of power that "conduct the conduct" of populations and individuals (Foucault, 2007; 2008). This theory of governmentality sought to explore how governmental power and rationalities conceptualise and therefore produce the population in a certain way, and then exercise a regulation of conduct through normalising techniques and the production of knowledges, norms and subjectivities. Thus the study of various 'mentalities' or 'rationales' of government is concerned with the discourses through which society and the population are produced and problematised, and the 'institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics' through which a regulatory power is exercised over the population (Foucault, 1991: 102). This work, then, links the production of particular subjects and subjectivities with governmental power, and importantly, enabled Foucault to make the shift from the concepts of power and knowledge towards exploring how the human subject enters games of truth (Foucault, 1994: 2), as well as providing a bridge to his later work on ethics (Dean, 2013: 3).

This work on governmentality was expanded into studies of the government of the self and ethics, both by Foucault and by a number of authors who have contributed to the literature on governmentality (Rose, 1999; 2000; Dean, 1994). Foucault's study of sexuality enquired into the history of morality regarding sex, and how subjects are formed and form *themselves* as ethical subjects. It links the intensified production of regimes of truth regarding sexuality with the growth of bio-power, whereby the development of instruments of the state intensified techniques of power which took every level of the social body as their target, from economic processes to biological life (Foucault, 1976: 141; 143). The ethical existence of subjects became an intensified concern of knowledge production; the regulation of society and individuals became less centred upon law and judicial power and more dependent upon a normalising power which, through a continuum of apparatuses that are concerned with life, regulate lives through the production of distributions (in the form of knowledge)

around a norm (Foucault, 1976: 144). In other words, morality became an effect of power over the production of knowledge and norms (Foucault, 1984b: 386-387). These norms encourage the obedience of the subject through producing "ethical" subject positions, and delimiting certain conducts, desires, beliefs and identities as prohibited, illicit and deviant.

What was significant about Foucault's work on sexuality is that it came to emphasise the self-formation of the ethical subject. Foucault's notion of governmentality provides a fulcrum between the government of the state and others, and the government of the self, such that his history of sexuality is concerned with 'a kind of morphology of the historical forms of ethical practice grounded in practices and techniques concerned with self-cultivation and self-stylization' (Dean, 1994: 158). Indeed governmentality theory is concerned with government as a governing of the individual's capacity for self-government. Foucault referred to governmentality as the 'contact between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self' (Foucault, 1988: 18). Liberal and Neoliberal governmentalities, which critique the notion of 'too much government'[5] (Snellnart, 2007: 383; Foucault, 2008: 296), govern at the level of subjectivities, in that they regulate through targeting the choices of individuals, their understanding of right and wrong, their expectations, aspirations and values, and even, as Rose puts it, their souls, such that individuals govern themselves (Rose, 1999: 5). Hence the importance of human and psychological sciences that have intensively targeted the individual and have produced criteria of normalcy (Rose, 1999: 133). Ways of speaking and thinking about conduct are constituted, subject

[5] Liberal and neoliberal governmentalities, which characterise the era in which we live (Foucault, 2007: 109), produce the population and society in a particular form. They conceive of society as a 'naturally self-regulating domain' (Burchell, 1991: 126), capable of self-government, with a set of natural, economic processes that are 'unknowable' to the sovereign (Gordon, 1991: 16; Foucault, 2007: 98). Liberal governmentality began from the assumption that there is too much government, and that self-limitation of government was desirable (Snellnart, 2007: 383; Foucault, 2008: 296). Government, therefore, came to depend upon knowledge and conceptual systems such as those of the human sciences or psychological sciences which produce society, and the subjects that inhabit it, in a particular form (Rose, 1999: 7). Liberal governmentality, then, is not the absence of regulation and power over conduct; it is a governing of the individual through the production of truth, moralities, norms and the limiting and forming of subject positions. Dean describes it as 'total' in that its existence it linked to the 'facilitation and augmentation of the power of civil society … to establish a comprehensive normalization of social, economic and cultural existence' (Dean, 2007: 98).

positions are produced, and these have a constraining yet productive effect upon the 'self-awareness and self-understanding that human beings acquire and display in their own lives' (Rose, 1999: xviii).

Subjectivities are formed by the subject in relation to moral or ethical schemata. Rose (1999: xx) understands this ethics as 'everyday, practical procedures, systems and regimes of injunction, prohibition, judgement through which human beings come to understand, and act upon their daily conduct'. In its more intensified form, the subjectivities that individuals can acquire through negotiation with the discursive world around them are 'accompanied by distinctive forms of pathology or exception to … norms' (Dean, 2007: 15). Human and psychological sciences and expert bodies that target individual conducts and "souls" articulate normalcy, producing certain conduct and behaviours as desirable, while 'regarding others as odd, deviant or even pathological' (Atkinson, 2002: 99). Conduct, defined by Foucault as the 'real behaviour of people in relation to the moral code which is imposed upon them', is thus self-regulated in relation to the 'positive and negative value of different possible behaviours' (Foucault, 1984a: 352). A subject position confers an 'ensemble of beliefs' upon the subject, as it is through discourse that the world and their structural position is made sense of, and further, subject positions 'incite certain practices' (Smith, 1998: 58; 63). Subjectivities, therefore, are an integral resource for the governing and regulation of the population (Rose, 1999: 5). The identities and actions that are held and taken within society, then, relate to the landscape of hegemonic discourses that 'delineate what is possible, what can be said and done, what positions may legitimately be taken, [and] what actions may be engaged in' (Norval, in Smith, 1998: 64-65).

This thesis argues that the individual's national subjectivity can be considered the target of normalising, proscriptive, and problematising knowledges in that discourses of the nation, nationalism and "national identity" are concerned with the conduct and values of denizens and citizens. Whether the concern is with the individual's loyalty or willingness to participate in national struggles – as in times of national crisis and war – or with the individual's conformity to liberal, tolerant, inclusive, and therefore "legitimate" forms or nationalism, the national subject's values, woldviews and

conduct can be problematised and measured against moral codes and normative positions. Different national contexts at different times are shaped by certain hegemonic notions of "nationness" and "good citizenship" which are espoused by political and national elites, and which delimit an ideal citizen, with an attendant ethical schemata. These discourse are then negotiated with, and internalised by denizens. For example, in her work on "everyday" understandings of citizenship in Germany, Miller Idriss (2006: 554-558) identifies behavioural and attitudinal criteria which her participants deem important for defining what it means to be a good German citizen. Thus the values and conducts of individuals in relation to their nation-state are evaluated through normative criteria.

The governmentalisation of the national subject served a practical purpose in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The institutions and techniques that enabled the development and organisation of the nation-state, from mass education, the establishment of common languages, to military conscription, were 'national' projects, that 'nationalised' the social body; they turned peasants into national subjects (Malešević, 2019: 8-9). Nationalism as an ideology produced individuals that would have otherwise identified with disparate groups as national subjects, and the emptiness of the 'the nation' as a referent of nationalist ideologies enabled them to circumvent internal discords and interests and encompass the entire social order (Malešević, 2013: 12-13). Thus at a time when nation-states required more than passivity from their populations, and the practical consent of citizens as potential soldiers and tax payers became necessary (Hobsbawm, 1994: 80), the entry of the national subject into techniques of discipline, regulation, and importantly, normative control, became an imperative of governmental rationale.

A task of this thesis, then, is to explore the extent to which national subjectivities confer ethical stances and normative positions. Individuals continually produce themselves as national subjects in everyday life, and therefore enter into, and negotiate with power structures that constitute them in relation to certain discursive articulations of nationality and the nation. The power that constitutes national subjects can also exercise a degree of normative control and regulation, as subject positions are replete with ethical norms, codes and proscriptions. Davies and Harré

argue that as individuals position or locate themselves in a discursive narrative, their entry into these social structures means entry into moral systems, which confer social expectations and codes of conduct (Davies & Harré, 1990: 43-59). In having knowledge of social structures, the subject, in assuming a subject position, is aware of obligations and expectations, and the ethical schemata that they have entered into (Davies & Harré, 1990: 43). Such codes provide the basis of social expectations that individuals may hold for how others are to conduct themselves, and also provide ethical schemata through which individuals shape their own conduct and their values. These codes can establish, in the form of social norms, what it is to be a good member of the nation, and what conduct is desirable. Such normative schemata can also determine what conduct is considered bad and undesirable.

National subjects, however, are able to exercise a degree of self-formation in how discursive norms and codes are negotiated with and internalised, and how they construct their ethical selves. Much like how individual subjects come to creatively negotiate with their discursive understanding of their national self and their national context, their ethical and moral existence, especially in relation to their national self, is produced through the same negotiation with discursive norms and rules. This theme, then, will explore the extent to which ethical and normative positions shape the values, beliefs, social expectations, judgements and conduct of the individual in relation to the nation.

Conclusion

This chapter has set out the theoretical framework through which the national self is conceptualised and studied in this thesis. It posited a notion of national subjectivity. Bringing together work by Michel Foucault and the Essex School of Discourse Theory, this chapter outlined a theoretical framework that it argues contributes a more suitable approach to studying the national self than is provided by the notion of "national identity." This thesis argues that the framework provides a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the nature of the national self, and contributes new

insights into particular areas. This conclusion will re-stipulate the central claims of this subjectivity-discourse framework.

Firstly, the theoretical framework contributes new insights into the formation and nature of the national subject. The subject is formed through the exercise of power. They are formed, to a degree, through their interaction with the discursive meanings which constitute society, and are thus shaped by the relative power relations between discourses vying for conceptual hegemony. However, subjects are able to exercise power over their own self-formation due to the empty, unfixed and fleeting nature of discourse and subjectivities. The subject is able to creatively produce themselves because of the inability to ever fix or complete a subject position; freedom is conferred by the need to re-iterate or re-produce one's subjectivities. National subjects are formed and re-formed through a creative negotiation with discursive meaning, and are, by their very nature, fleeting and shifting. It is possible, therefore, to occupy multiple, competing and contradictory national subjectivities, due to the capacity to re-constitute oneself as context requires. The meaning of national constructs are also unfixed. As was explained above, populating empty signifiers involves certain processes and operations whereby a discourse is given meaning through invoking a constitutive outside or other. The constitutive outside enables meaning to be delimited, but also makes discourse unfixed as it challenges its objectivity and demonstrates its contingency. National subjectivities, then, are fluid, shifting, and creatively constituted as they are continually reproduced, and the emptiness of these nodal points provide surfaces of inscription which can accommodate a broad variety of discursive meanings and articulations.

Secondly, the theoretical framework contributes new insights into the ethical and normative implications and dimensions of the national subject. The work of Foucault in particular enables a conceptualisation of the national subject as an entity that is produced in relation to normative and ethical schemata. This is an important dimension of the national self because discursive meaning is not neutral, and confers schemata which structure the individual's normative and ethical relationship with their social context. Normative understanding of how the world 'is' perpetuate and legitimize the power relations that establish such discursive norms, and reproduce the

moral and ethical standards and positions that such norms confer. Discourse confers ethical schemata and normative frameworks which structure how the individual interprets, assesses, evaluates, categorises and articulates the social world around them, and therefore shapes their values, worldviews and conduct. National subjectivities, therefore, confer normative and ethical frameworks on the individual. However, it must also be understood that individuals are able to negotiate with moral codes and norms, and are therefore not necessary sutured into ethical schemata. Agency can be exercised in the negotiation and interaction with the ethical dimensions of national subjectivities.

Having outlined the subjectivity-discourse framework, the next chapter will introduce the case study at hand: the Welsh nation. It will provide the context and background for the national case study to which the theoretical framework will be applied. Using a subjectivity-discourse perspective, which approaches contemporary and historical Welsh national "identities" as having been shaped by the discursive landscape through which its denizens come to form their self-understanding, Chapter Three will explore various contemporary and historical discursive representation of Welshness, the Welsh nation and the Welsh language. It will therefore explain the context in which the research participants involved in this project form their national subjectivities.

Chapter Three – The Context of Wales

Introduction

Having outlined the subjectivity-discourse framework in the previous chapter, this chapter turns to an examination of the Welsh nation. It is the case study to which this framework will be applied, and will be used to demonstrate the conceptual potential and capability of this framework. Before going on to the analysis of the empirical research conducted, this chapter will take a close look at the context of Wales and the national subjectivities found within it. What this chapter will do, then, is to explain from a subjectivity-discourse perspective how the Welsh nation and national subjectivities within it have been formed and shaped. It will look at the various ways that the constructs of Wales, the Welsh people, and the Welsh language have been discursively articulated. From the perspective of the subjectivity-discourse approach, this chapter will provide an explanation and overview of the context in which people living in Wales construct their national subjectivities.

Wales as a case study offers a rich and challenging context to be explored. National subjectivities in Wales have long been constructed in a complex environment; not only are its denizens bombarded by at least two national constructs in the form of Wales and Britain, but Welsh national "identities" have, until relatively recently, been characterised by a fractured society in which several different and distinct notions of Welshness have existed (Bowie, 1993; Johnes, 2010: 1260). As Coupland et al. write, 'historical patterns of political, linguistic and socio-economic change in Wales have created a legacy of structural diversity' (2006: 2). While all nations, whether nation-states or sub-state nations, experience their own complexities in terms of how their denizens construct and express their national identities, Wales has experienced particularly stark divisions in how various communities have articulated their national selves. Furthermore, the presence of the Welsh language, the most tangible dispositif of Welshness, offers a valuable social construct for analysis, as its conceptualisation at different moments in Wales' past says much about the conceptualisation of the Welsh nation itself. The language has at different and sometimes recurring times been seen

as a marker of uniqueness, a source of pride, a symbol of backwardness, a sign of exclusion, and a tool for nation-building. For these reasons, then, Wales offers a rich case study for analysis.

This chapter will present the development of national and social subjectivities in Wales from a discursive perspective, exploring the relative hegemony of different conceptualisations of constructs such as Wales, Welshness, the Welsh people, Britishness and the Welsh language, leading up to the contemporary context. How, then, does one start to explore the discourses through which the Welsh nation is understood, and through which Welshness is made sense of? While the next chapters will address this question through an analysis of empirical interview data, this chapter can examine the discursive landscape in which the participants live, and prise out some of the more prominent discourses through which Wales and Welshness have been, and are, articulated. This chapter begins with an overview of how Wales and Welshness are articulated in much of public and political discourse, with an emphasis on notions of an inclusive, multicultural and civic nation. This discourse, however, is an attempt to address Wales' historically fractured national landscape. Therefore, the remainder of this chapter will examine how these fractures emerged, how competing and shifting notions of Wales, Welshness and Britishness have vied for hegemony, and how these have shaped national and social subjectivities in Wales such that its recent history has seen a plurality of different experiences of Welshness. The chapter will conclude with an assessment of how these fractures shape Welsh national discourses since devolution, so as to explain the national context in which the research participants featured in subsequent chapters are living.

Discourses of Contemporary Wales

To someone looking in at Wales from the outside, they could be forgiven for thinking that the Welsh nation has always been surefooted and confident in its identity. They would encounter the Wales projected by such things as political discourse and

rhetoric, public buildings, museums[6], postcards[7] and merchandise, tourism advertisements and television programmes[8]. These are a mix of apparatuses, institutions and dispositifs that are both outward and inward facing. The way they represent Wales to the outside world and to itself offers a glimpse into the discursive landscape of Wales today and how the nation is articulated. They contribute to a continuous and active dialogue within the Welsh nation, invoking, reproducing, and encouraging certain discourses of who we were, who we are, and where we're going as a nation.

A particular site of discursive production of Welshness and the Welsh nation that has attracted much academic and public attention is that of political discourses. The National Assembly for Wales, since its founding in 1999, has provided a specific political voice for Wales and a platform from which Welsh politicians can contribute to the conversation on Wales and Welshness. A particular emphasis has been placed on 'inclusiveness' in Welsh political discourse since devolution, with politicians, academics, and commentators promoting a civic, inclusive and multicultural notion of citizenship in Wales, challenging notions of ethnic or cultural Welshness (Guidici, 2012: 231, Davies, 2010: 186; Osmond, 2012; Chaney & Fevre, 2001: 41, Coupland et al., 2006: 25). Some commentators have even advocating going 'beyond' the nation, rejecting the "national" in favour of notions of a post-national citizenship (Williams, 2005: 16; Williams, 2015: 5). This distinction between an ethnic and civic basis for national "identity" and nationalism is problematic, and has been shown to be a largely false distinction[9], yet its prevalence in Wales today serves a political function. As will

[6] Museums, writes Mason, 'function as palimpsests upon which public histories and national identities are written and rewritten', and act as public forums on national identity and national history (Mason, 2004: 29).

[7] For a detailed analysis of how different notions of Wales are represented on postcards see Pritchard & Morgan (2003).

[8] Modern Wales has been portrayed in high profile television programmes like Dr Who and Gavin and Stacey (Blandford, 2010: 291-294). Recently, rural Welsh locations have been represented in a new wave of noir crime dramas which weave together local Welsh myths, stunning landscapes and specifically Welsh stories and characters (Jones 2018; Turner, 2013).

[9] A number of authors have argued that has argued that the distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism, advanced by theorists such as Ignatieff (1994), has little analytical and normative merit (Brubaker, 1998; Spencer & Wollman, 2005). Brubaker states that 'the civic-ethnic distinction is … used within regions, sometimes in an ideological mode, to distinguish one's own good, legitimate civic nationalism from the illegitimate ethnic nationalism of one's neighbours' (1998: 298). He also argues that trying to define ethnic or civic nationalism is problematic: if ethnic nationalism is interpreted

be argued below, it appears to be an attempt to overcome the fractured nature of identities in Wales, emphasising an inclusive and multicultural Welsh national identity which supersedes national identities constructed on "ethnic" or class identities.

A framework for Welsh civic life, in terms of civic institutions, had been laid before devolution with the steady expansion of the role of the Welsh Office, Welsh-medium education and a specific Welsh curriculum, and the establishment of S4C (Bradbury & Andrews, 2010: 235-236; Davies, 2006: 118). Since devolution, the political parties in the Welsh Assembly have encouraged the dissemination of this discourse, and have, according to Bradbury and Andrews, 'converged on the politics of a civic Welshness' (Bradbury & Andrews, 2010). Williams (2018) has expanded upon Bradbury and Andrews' analysis of civic political convergence through an investigation of how political parties have conflated their own political ideologies with certain notions of Welshness, emphasising versions of civic Welshness corresponding to their political leanings (Williams, 2018: 306). Wales, then, despite the articulation of different ideological versions of civic Welshness, is represented by this political elite as a singular civic entity with national public institutions, and this discourse of a civic Welsh nation bridges different historical understanding of Welshness and asserts the existence of a Welsh political arena (Bradbury & Andrews, 2010: 236-237).

The public and academic discourses on the Welsh language today are very much related to the appearance and promotion of an inclusive, civic and multicultural Wales since devolution (Thomas, 2013: 212, Mann, 2007: 221). The position of the Welsh language in Wales has altered dramatically since the mid-twentieth century. The Welsh language once appeared to be facing extinction as the number of Welsh speakers continually dwindled (Lewis, 1998). As a minority language within the Welsh nation, it became increasingly confined to rural enclaves in the north and west of the country, became increasingly associated with the ''traditionalist' Wales of rurality,

broadly as ethnocultural, while civic nationalism is interpreted narrowly as an 'acultural conception of citizenship', then 'civic nationalism gets defined out of existence'. He adds that 'even the paradigmatic cases of civic nationalism – France and America – cease to count as civic nationalism, since they have a cultural component' (Brubaker, 1998: 299). Similarly, Kiely et al. found in their work on identity markers in Scotland, a nation often touted as exemplifying a civic nationalism, that while a significant proportion of people did place *some* importance on civic notions of belonging, nationality was still conceptualised through what could be described as ethnic identity markers (Kiely et al., 2005: 152).

religion and an old-fashioned middle-class of preachers, teachers and public servants' (Day, 2002: 216), and drew apathy and, occasionally, hostility from Anglophone Wales. Following campaigns to tackle its decline and achieve official status for the language, and due to changing nature of Welsh national consciousness, perceptions of the language have since changed significantly (Day, 2002: 217). It gained an increasing presence in Welsh life as it became embedded in the emerging public bodies of civic Wales in the 1980s and 1990s, with the creation of a Welsh language television channel, S4C, and the expansion of Welsh-medium education within a specifically Welsh curriculum in 1988 (Day, 2002: 216). Following the 1993 Welsh Language Act which accorded it equal status with English, Cole and Williams describe how alongside such a policy was an attempted normalisation of the language, whereby the use of the language was to be extended 'into the optimum range of social situations as a normal medium of communication, especially in the private sector, entertainment, sport and the media' (Cole & Williams, 2004: 563).

Even in the late 1990s analysts were identifying a change in the bases of the Welsh language, with its moving into more urban settings disentangling its association with the traditional and establishing the language as more secular and forward looking (Aitchison and Carter, 1998: 173-174). A survey published in 2018 and carried out on behalf of the Welsh Government found that eighty three per cent of non-Welsh speakers agreed that the Welsh language was something to be proud of, with nearly two thirds of non-Welsh speaking respondents agreeing that more should be done to support the language (Statistics for Wales, 2018: 8). Symbolically significant is its use in the 'linguistic landscape' across Wales, in which it acts as a dispositif of Wales' linguistic and national distinctiveness, and contributes to the status of the language through enhancing its social capital[10] (Landry & Bourhis, 1997: 29). As well as its presence on bilingual road signs and commercial and public signage, it adorns such things as the face of the iconic Millennium Centre, and t-shirts worn by the Welsh football team[11]. The sprinkling of this bilingual landscape across all of Wales, the large

[10] For a study of the Welsh language using Bourdieu's notion of social capital and symbolic violence see Brooks (2013).

[11] Having qualified for the 2016 European Football Championship, the Welsh men's football team celebrated wearing t-shirts with the word "diolch" printed on them.

absolute numbers of Welsh speakers in urban centres (Day, 2002: 217), and the increasing demand and provision of Welsh-medium education in even the most Anglicised parts of the country (Hodges, 2009: 19; 2012: 356) enables the language to be repositioned as belonging to all of Wales, as opposed to a geographic and cultural enclave.

Indeed politicians, academics and activists have rearticulated the Welsh language within a framework of a civic, inclusive and multicultural Wales (Williams, 2015: 146; Coupland, 2006: 25). Once the concern of a marginal political minority, today all political parties in Wales have adopted a favourable attitude towards the Welsh language and have expressed fairly wide-ranging support for attempts to halt language decline, even by parties for whom issues of the language were previously unimportant or the source of contention (BBC News, 2016b). This process demonstrates what Gramsci described as a subsumption of subaltern worldviews by a hegemonic bloc[12]. This would have seemed unlikely only a few years ago.

Welsh Assembly Governments dominated by the Labour party have 'undertaken a major commitment to construct a bilingual society in Wales' (Cole and Williams, 2004: 564). This was embodied in the Welsh Assembly Government's *Iaith Pawb* (2003), which even in its title (Everybody's Language) suggests a role for the language at the heart of civic Wales, and not only for the already existing Welsh communities and heartlands[13]. The Labour Government's latest Welsh language strategy *Cymraeg: 2050*, aims at achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050, an ambitious and purposeful statement, welcomed across the political spectrum by the Welsh

[12] Gramsci wrote about several features of the relationship between subaltern and hegemonic groups. He wrote about the possibility for subaltern groups to shape the worldviews of the dominant group, writing that the can attempt to 'influence the programmes of [dominant political] formations in order to press claims of their own' (Gramsci, 1971: 52). He also wrote about how dominant political formation can absorb or adopt certain worldviews of the subaltern groups, stating that 'undoubtedly the fact of hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed' (Gramsci, 1971: 161). He thus presupposes that within dominant groups, new movements can be formed so as to 'conserve the assent of the subaltern groups and to maintain control over them' (Gramsci, 1971: 52).

[13] This was superseded in 2006 by the 2012-2017 Welsh Language Strategy entitled *A Living Language: A Language for Living*. Implemented by Leighton Andrews, himself a Welsh learner, it focused on encouraging both language acquisition and language use in order to see the Welsh language thriving in Wales (Welsh Assembly Government, 2012: 14).

Conservatives and even the UK Independence Party (BBC News, 2016b). The Labour and Conservative Parties have both made commitments to the sustainability and growth of the Welsh language in recent Assembly Election manifestos (Welsh Conservative Party, 2016; Welsh Labour Party, 2016: 20), with the Conservative party launching their *Tipyn Bach* initiative to roll out the Welsh language to areas where it isn't widely spoken (Welsh Conservative Party, 2016). Therefore the discursive articulations of Welshness and the Welsh nation put forward in the policies and publications of most Welsh political parties employ the Welsh language as an important signifier positioned at the heart of a civic Welshness.

The emphasis on an inclusive and civic notion of the Welsh nation and Welshness was driven partly by political expediency to attract those from across the political spectrum to the principle of devolution (Chaney & Favre, 2001: 23). This rhetoric in public and political discourse, however, is also an attempt to overcome, accommodate or "heal" a nation that has been characterised since its modern incarnation by social, political, class, religious, linguistic and cultural fractures (Jones, 1992: 355; Bowie, 1993). A 'One Wales' strategy has been pursued by the Assembly Government, for example, in order to support a common Welsh national identity (Harries, 2014: 1). The implicit and explicit civic nationalism at the heart of public and political discourses of Welshness attempts to accommodate Wales' multiple communities, as it insists that the Welsh nation is not the property of any particular group, and avoids the privileging of any one group and the devaluing of others as second-class citizens (Stilz, 2009: 259).

Indeed the national identities and subjectivities of Wales for the past two centuries have been shaped by multiple discursive conceptualisations of Welshness, leading Dai Smith to describe Wales as 'a singular noun, but a plural experience' (1984: 1). This civic Wales, then, is but one more mythic construction of Wales in an already existing constellation of the mythic Welsh nation (Coupland, 2006: 3). Furthermore, Welsh national discourses have been in varying complex positions of competition, co-option and synthesis with not only British national discourses, but also discourses which encourage the primacy of political, religious and class subjectivities and identifications over the national. Therefore, while Wales today more than ever has the apparatuses,

dispositifs and institutions that contribute to the process of nation-building and the strengthening of a national consciousness, the divisions and fractures in Welsh society still very much characterise the nature of national subjectivities in Wales. In the remainder of this chapter, the development of historical cleavages in Welsh national discourses and subjectivities will be examined, concluding with an examination of how Wales' fractured past shapes the landscape of Welsh national discourses today.

The Birth of the Modern Welsh Nation

The principal movement through which the modern Welsh nation was formed occurred only during the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, particularly from 1770 onwards (Smith, 1984: 37). The emergence of the Welsh nation was influenced by domestic and international movements. Domestically, the Welsh people were exposed to the British nation-state, a hegemonic construct fostering the idea of the nation as an organisational, symbolic and imaginary entity. Liberal ideas and the emergence of new social scientific disciplines were changing the relationship between government and the population, and new conceptions of the market and the economy gave rise to the notion of civil society; a "natural" social body delineated along *national* lines (Foucault, 2008: 296). Thus in the late eighteenth century, exposed to this new reality of the nation, movements began producing Wales through the prism of the nation.

Wales was undergoing significant social and economic changes due to industrialisation in the south and parts of the north, and the instability brought about by changing patterns of rural life[14] (Jenkins, 1995: 381). It was a time of identity crisis, characterised by the Anglicisation of the landowning classes and the upper echelons of the established church, and the loss of many older aspects of Welsh life (Jenkins, 1995: 374, 377). As Williams writes, 'the peculiar development of Great Britain in this, one of its marginal yet mercantile provinces, was slowly prising its society apart, opening a gulf between classes and languages … and creating intellectual and moral

[14] This insecurity was due to changes to farm leasing (Jenkins, 1995: 381)

space for alternatives' (1985: 151). With such changes, there was a sense that the old traditions, customs and culture of the folk were disappearing (Smith, 1984: 37; Morgan, 1996: 43). There began, writes Morgan, an 'unprecedented outburst of interest in things Welsh and [a] highly self-conscious activity to preserve or develop them' (Morgan, 1996: 43). In Wales, there was no shortage of influential intellectuals who, appearing at the tip of the movements across Europe that were 'stamping nations out of the ground and weaving new tricolours out of old legends', were producing and re-discovering a Welsh nation (Williams, 1985: 141).

International influences played a significant role in forming the Welsh nation as ripples from the American and French Revolutions reached Wales. Into this mix of an early national consciousness, and a Romantic interest with the past, was introduced an active Welsh intelligentsia, based in and outside of Wales, which was inspired by the revolutions in America and France to develop a political radicalism and Jacobinism with a specifically Welsh focus (Jenkins, 1995: 377). Welsh societies in London, the *Cymmrodorion* and *Gwyneddigion*, both influenced by the American and French Revolutions, were influential in fostering a new Welsh consciousness through their interest in, and celebration of, all things Welsh. These groups of Welsh organic intellectuals were, as Williams puts it, 'spiritual Americans', 'strong supporters of 1776' (1985: 164). They combined their political radicalism, with its objective of 'freedom in country and church, with an enthusiastic interest in Welsh culture, history and the language (Davies, 1990: 326). Through this nationalism, the radicals of the era sought to reproduce Wales through the principles that had liberated America and France. Indeed the promise of Liberty and freedom which America offered had a profound effect upon influential Welsh patriots[15][16].

[15] One such intellectual, William Jones of Llangadfan – a poet, scholar, and ardent follower of Voltaire – urged his compatriots at the resurrected Llanrhwst Eisteddfod 1792 to 'summon up enough courage to abandon their oppressed native land and make for the Land of Liberty in America' (Jenkins, 1995: 365).

[16] The myth of Prince Madoc, the supposed discoverer and settler of America three centuries before Columbus was invoked at a crucial time, when many in Wales turned towards America in order to escape the 'indifference, hostility and repression' which the Welsh nationalists encountered in eighteenth century Britain (Williams, 1985: 140). Madoc played a significant symbolic role; a heroic figure who 'took his people out of an old brutal and corrupt world into a springtime of freedom in a new one' (Williams, 1985: 164).

Of significant influence was the French Revolution, as it had harnessed the emerging idea of nation and nationhood, and had a substantial effect upon the emergence of national discourses throughout Europe (Steiner in Jenkins, 1995: 377). William Jones Llangadfan, a radical that sought to reproduce Wales along the lines that had liberated America and France, believed that the revolution 'had ushered in a new era, pregnant with promise for small, neglected and down-trodden nations' (Jenkins, 1995: 377). Indeed Jones' political radicalism was closely tied to his interest in the 'plight of Welsh culture and the self-image of the nation' (Jenkins, 1995: 377). An active contributor to the Welsh cultural life, Jones believed that 'every true Welshman was charged with the responsibility to care for the success of the nation' (Jenkins, 1995: 371; 378). He was typical of the colourful intellectuals who expressed the Enlightenment principles of liberty and political freedoms, but couched such politics in a specifically Welsh "national" context.

Many did this by inventing, resurrecting and exaggerating Welsh traditions, myths, histories, heroes and customs and projecting onto these an image of ancient Wales as embodying the spirit of political radicalism. There occurred a great deal of inventing, rediscovering and rejuvenating past traditions (Morgan, 1996: 44). Thus the Welsh past became re-imagined and reproduced embodying modern Enlightenment values, whether it was the resurrected Druidism and Bardic guilds that were painted as the inheritors of a 'libertarian Druidism', continuing the 'advance towards freedom and justice,' or the Eisteddfodau, resurrected as 'freedom Eisteddfods', and intended to promote political freedoms among Welsh poets and writers (Williams, 1985: 166). This 'romantic mythologizing' occurred throughout Europe, and in Wales as elsewhere it forged a new sense of Welshness with a grand and ancient history and a rich cultural heritage. 'Romantic mythologizing' was based often on bogus scholarship, yet it was received with much popularity (Morgan, 1996: 44). Often, Eisteddfod prizes were given for literary works on Welsh historical themes, spreading interest in Welsh traditions amongst the people (Morgan, 1996: 60). History books became very popular, and myths such as the Druidic heritage of the bards which appeared at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were largely unchallenged as they

were received with 'national delight', and gave to the common people of Wales 'drama and colour to their drab existence' (Morgan, 1986: 32).

The revival of Eisteddfodau from the 1780s onwards, which had a great impact on how new Welsh national discourses were disseminated, was driven by the *Cymmrodorion* and the *Gwyneddigion*. These societies, formed in London between 1751 and 1770, were concerned with Welsh literature, history and important Welsh issues of the day (Morgan, 1996: 58-59). They were highly influential in encouraging, funding and organising Eisteddfodau and publicising the growing Welsh literary and musical traditions (Morgan, 1996: 59). The individuals in these Societies had a significant role in convincing the members of their nation that their national identity should be a source of pride (Hroch, 2006: 10). Such was their influence and principal role in shaping notions of Welshness that Williams writes that 'the new Welsh nation was manufactured in London' (1985: 162).

Iolo Morganwg stands out as a towering figure in the promotion of various invented traditions. He was a 'romantic forger in an age of romantic forgers of good cause' (Williams, 1985: 165). Morganwg has his place, as Brooks states, among the pantheon of similar European figures who created much of the raw material that would come to define their nation (2015: 30). Morganwg claimed to be among the 'the last remaining bards who came from the druidic apostolic succession', and put neo-Druidism at the heart of Welsh cultural life (Morgan, 1996: 60-61). A popularly received movement had already emerged which re-wrote the history of Wales and the Welsh language as a history of the ancient Celts (Morgan, 1996: 66). As Morgan writes, the significance of this new imagined history is that for the first time in two hundred years, 'Welshmen quickly realized that they had been given … a vision of their own history which was autonomous and separate from England' (1996: 68).

Seizing upon the national delight in this rediscovered past, Morganwg's ideas of the Welsh nation were readily consumed by a people learning to understand themselves as a nation. In search of Welsh institutions to furnish the nation, he invented the *gorsedd*; guilds of bards which he installed throughout Wales, for which he invented rituals and ceremonies, and encouraged their connection to a Druidic heritage (Morgan, 1996: 61; Williams, 1985: 165). The *gorsedd* was introduced to the National

Eisteddfod in 1819, where it still exists today. It had the effect that Iolo Morganwg desired. When merged with the National Eisteddfod, a burgeoning national institution in itself, the *gorsedd* anchored the mythologised history of ancient Wales within a popular event and national pastime. Not only was the *gorsedd* a 'revival' of a bardic order, but it created a 'national cultural institution for Wales, a kind of supporters' club for the language, literature and history of the Welsh' (Morgan, 1996: 61). Eisteddfodau were popularly attended, and so such invented histories, traditions, ceremonies and customs reached wide audiences, further disseminating the discourses which came to establish the Welsh nation as an ethnic, linguistic and cultural entity.

Language in particular was seen to embody the spirit of the nation, and the Romantic turn towards historicism – towards the idealisation of a past Golden Age – centred upon language as a vehicle for Romanticising the 'essence' of the nation and its people[17] (Herder, 1968). The Welsh language was a particular element of Welsh daily life that was rearticulated with the birth of the modern nation. The increased significance given to language as a symbol of a people's uniqueness and a romantic badge of belonging put it at the centre of new national discourses. Across Europe, languages were becoming important pillars of national consciousnesses. There emerged the belief that language reflected the souls of those who spoke it (Brooks, 2015: 41). Iolo Morganwg channelled Herder's thought on the language and the nation in his association of native languages with the people (*priod iaith a phriod bobl*) (Brooks, 2015: 30).

[17] Herder's thought on this is rather nuanced: 'A close reading of Herder's work … suggests the idea that *Völker* are best understood as groups of people identifiable through a particular linguistic context: namely, the ongoing activity of expression (that is, speaking a language, and speaking it consciously to and with others). Nations, on the other hand, may be seen as products of the expressed linguistic content which historically and naturally develops within and through each particular group (that is, the literary and folk heritage which grounds whatever the *Volk* has spoken and continues to speak about). Thus Herder presents us with a different way of understanding affective attachment, one which assumes a relationship between two ideal communities: first, the linguistic space or field of communal self-realization, an aesthetic context within which identities are revealed and recognized; second, a historically cultivated national community, an affecting collectivity whose cultural particularities are inseparable from one's experience of the world. Both *Volk* and nation may be thus understood as aspects of a process by which language binds us to what we truly are' (Fox, 2003: 244).

The Welsh language was intimately related to the re-discovery and manufacture of a Welsh nation as both a symbol in its own right, and as an instrument through which this new discourse of the Welsh nation was disseminated. Print capitalism became a key instrument through which the Welsh nation in its early-modern form was disseminated and consumed (Anderson, 1991). Anderson wrote of the importance of the printing press for the formation of imagined communities, and Wales exemplifies this role. The eighteenth century saw a large increase in the number of secular books published in Welsh, as well as the commencement of publishing and printing of books within Wales itself (Morgan, 1996: 69). A large number of dictionaries and books on Welsh grammar were being published, with attempts made to standardise the language (Morgan, 1996: 70). As the Welsh population were mostly monolingual Welsh speakers, this created the conditions for a substantial Welsh press (Brooks, 2015: 19-20). This was coupled with a significant rise in literacy in Wales, resulting in the majority of the adult population in this period being technically literate (Williams, 1982: 41). Such was the extent of the Welsh press in crucial period in modern nation-forming that Wales was 'over-producing' printers. Williams describes how every little town in Wales had its press, and the Welsh were bombarded with the 'over-produced' journals which they turned out (1982: 41). The effect of the emergence of this reading public, an increasingly standardised form of written Welsh, as well as the emergence of a popular secular literature, was the creation in Wales of a unified field of exchange and communication (Anderson, 1991: 44).

The growth of Welsh print capitalism also led to a change in how the language was perceived. Whereas previously the language had held little status, a new sense of pride in the language was emerging alongside the burgeoning interest in Wales. Since the sixteenth century, the status of Welsh had suffered as it failed to keep pace with the Latin and English of renaissance Europe. Welsh texts had been predominantly religious (Williams, 1985: 131). As the language became more oral and fragmented, its failure to embrace the modern world left it still a popular language, yet one which was rooted in an older time (Williams, 1985: 130-131). With the renaissance of interest in all things Welsh, Morgan writes that the status of Welsh, perceived as the 'Celtic mother-tongue' of the Druids (Morgan, 1986: 28), had grown such that it came

to be seen as a 'national asset and even a national monument' (Morgan, 1996: 71). The language was rearticulated and placed at the centre of new Welsh national discourses. Thus the Welsh language became both a 'national monument' which was to be celebrated, and an instrument that disseminated new discourses within a self-delimiting society.

Despite the success of the Welsh organic intellectuals in producing a Welsh nation, and in disseminating these discourses to the wider population, the politically radical dimensions of their ideas were not adopted by the popular masses. As Morgan points out, the political radicals and Jacobins had little success in transplanting such interest in political freedoms to the Eisteddfodau they funded (Morgan, 1996: 60). Indeed the atmosphere in Wales, he writes, became increasingly anti-revolutionary and loyalist (1996: 60). They were only partially successful in hegemonising their worldviews; the popular masses were receptive to discourses of a nationally defined grand and heroic Welsh past, and of a Welsh nation delimited by culture and language, yet the political radicalism failed to attract the interests of the population (Morgan, 1996: 60; see Brooks, 2004: 16). By the end of the eighteenth century, political radicalism and secular thought drowned in the 'organised, conservative, British and Imperial Methodism of the nineteenth century' (Brooks, 2004: 17).

Liberal and Nonconformist Wales

If the previous period suggested the emergence of a national consciousness and a coherent, bounded nation, how did the nineteenth and twentieth centuries century come to be characterised by the steady decline of the Welsh language, the increasing accommodation of, and loyalty to the British state by the Welsh people, and the fracturing of Welsh society along cultural, linguistic, political and class-based lines? The answer to these questions lie in the development in Welsh life of a more complex environment in which the romantic discourses of the ethno-linguistic Welsh nation were challenged, countered and rearticulated by the hegemony of Liberal and nonconformist Wales, and later Socialist and Labour Wales. Furthermore, the

nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Wales were significantly shaped by the *British* nationalism embedded in Liberal and Socialist discourses. This nationalism gave the people of Wales multiple national loyalties and identities, but also created hierarchies between "civic" British nationalism and a problematised "ethnic" Welshness. This section will use Brooks' assertion that as opposed to the orthodox understanding of Welsh history, which sees the emergence of a nonconformist Liberal Wales in the nineteenth century as the emergence of a Welsh national consciousness, the liberal and socialist political and ideological traditions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries restricted a particularistic Welsh national consciousness (Brooks, 2015: 1). This led to the prevalence of class, political, religious and British-national identities alongside, and in competition with, Welsh national identities. In other words, Welshness was negotiated within or through other hegemonic political, social, class, religious and British-national identities which often took precedence over Welshness. Ultimately, the fractures in Welsh life will be shown to derive from the accommodation in Wales of other identities which were either hostile to what was perceived as ethno-linguistic Welshness, or relegated Welshness to a subordinate position.

The first half of the nineteenth century was a period of significant change in Wales. The Welsh national consciousness of radical and Jacobin Wales that had flowered in the later parts of the eighteenth century, though influential, was short lived (Williams, 1985: 172). By the nineteenth century, the likes of Iolo Morganwg, writes Williams, 'were already beginning to look like creatures from another age' (1985: 172). Wales was transformed by industrialisation, and was being integrated into Britain politically and economically[18] (Morgan, 1997: 94). The rapid rise of industry in south Wales in particular brought substantial in-migration from within Wales and elsewhere, depopulating rural Wales. Spurred on by the harshness of living and working conditions in the industrial towns, social unrest became a problem for both industrial and rural Wales, and the 'working classes' found a common consciousness and new

[18] The British nation-state, writes Williams, achieved a 'deep penetration among ordinary people' through the 'traumatic experience of a generation-long war against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France' (Williams, 1985: 142). Furthermore, the abolishment of the Court of Great Sessions in Wales in 1830 was, in effect, a completion of the Act of Union with England, abolishing the last significant institution which 'recognized Wales as a distinct and distinctive entity' (Jones, 1998: 242-243).

ways of organising through unions and the publication of periodicals and journals (Williams, 1985: 172; 193). The harsh conditions of industrial life and the poverty of rural areas made political radicalism and reformism into powerful causes, encouraging trade unionism, and a working-class reform movement in the form of Chartism from the late 1830s (Williams, 2013). The political radicalism of this time, however, bears little resemblance to that of the Jacobin period, as radical politics found expression in Liberalism and religious nonconformism.

The social and cultural landscape in Wales changed as it became a religious nonconformist nation. By the middle of the nineteenth century, 'most Welsh people lived their lives within the orbit of, or in reaction to, the chapels' (Williams, 1985: 206). Nonconformism had a profound influence over Welsh national identities, in that Nonconformists came to see themselves as the Welsh nation (Williams, 1985: 206). They were the 'real Welsh' and 'everything outside them came to seem only half-Welsh' (Williams, 1085: 206). As Williams states, religious dissent 'had no inherently Welsh character, but … in nineteenth century Wales could become the instrument and agency of mobilisation and a specific social ideology' (Williams, 1985: 234). It 'could serve as a non-class ideology which could create a national-popular will' (Williams, 1985: 234). The strong association between Welshness and Nonconformism mean that Welsh national consciousness was expressed through a religio-cultural cultural discourse, whereby 'Welshness … became a cause to which one adhered rather than a country to which one belonged' (Jones, 1992: 338-339). The emphasis that Nonconformists placed upon the importance of religious and political freedoms meant a real closeness between a Nonconformist consciousness and Liberal political values, a bond that strengthened throughout the nineteenth century (Brooks, 2015: 37).

Liberal politics became hegemonic in Wales as the harsh conditions of industry, the poverty of the countryside, and the desire for religious liberties among Nonconformists aligned the interests of various radical movements into a Liberal hegemonic bloc. The Liberal party enjoyed increasing electoral success throughout the century (Williams, 1985: 226), and the ideals of British liberal discourses became increasingly internalised by the Welsh people. This Liberalism would shape the relationship between Welsh people and their national selves as it contained within it

values, notions and ideals that stood in opposition to the particularism, parochialism, separatism, and elitism that came to be associated with ethno-nationalism. This Liberalism, at its heart, emphasised the primacy of the individual, the right and obligation for individuals to compete on equal and open footing, democracy, internationalism and universalism (Brooks, 2015: 68-69; 80). This had significant implications for discourses of Welshness. The emphasis on the individual and the universal articulated ethnic and linguistic particularism as a restriction on both the freedoms of the individual and their capacity to communicate and operate on a universal and general level (Brooks, 2015: 66). For Liberals in Wales, the answer to the ethnic, closed, undemocratic and elitist nature of ethno-linguistic Welshness was a civic Britishness, which could be formulated as a space of Liberal ideals and values. Welshness was not entirely jettisoned, but many in Wales articulated a Welshness which was compatible with Liberal thought and commensurate with civic Britishness. Thus Brooks refers to this Liberal Wales as anti-nationalistic (Brooks, 2015: 72).

While certain articulations of the Welsh nation were stigmatised and problematised by Liberalism, the "national" was still a significant aspect of Welsh life. The anti-nationalism of Liberalism was directed towards a particular articulation of ethno-linguistic Welshness, while the inherent British nationalism framed by Liberal discourses grew in prominence. This was an implicit and taken-for-granted British nationalism, articulated as neutral and thus distinctly non-nationalistic in nature. Wyn Jones argues that most political ideologies, from Liberalism to Socialism, exist in a symbiotic relationship with nationalism; a relationship taken for granted such that it appears 'natural' (Wyn Jones, 2007: 34-35). The civic sphere of universalism, democracy and equality advocated by Liberalism, and which was threatened by the ethnic nationalism of Britain's (Celtic) ethnic groups, was nonetheless a bounded British national sphere. And due to the position of English as a global language, and the near complete overlap between the English ethnic majority and the British nation-state context, the particularistic ethnic and linguistic underpinnings of British nationalism were erased. What Wales of the mid-nineteenth century experienced, then, was not an erasure of the nation and nationality in favour of the liberal, universal and international, but the challenging of Welsh ethno-linguistic national

subjectivities by a Welsh-British nationalism articulated through a different set of values, ideals and characteristics.

Ethno-linguistic discourses of the Welsh nation did not disappear. Throughout the nineteenth century, some in Wales would continue to embody Herderian notions of nationality as inherently ethnic and linguistic (Brooks, 2004: 3). It is a frustration with the British-oriented hegemony that would drive Michael D. Jones and his followers to Patagonia, a place where 'Welsh nationalists, despairing of their native country, set up in the Chubut valley where they intended to be a pure Homeland, a *gwladfa'* (Williams, 1985: 203). Welsh particularism, interest in Welsh cultural life, Welsh anti-colonialism[19], and Herderian ideas of the nation became the preserve of conservative intellectuals. These intellectuals, most notably the Llanover Circle of learned patriots, were still inventing Welsh customs, notably the Welsh 'traditional' costumes that were popularised as a kind of 'national' dress (Brooks, 2015: 41-42). They were enthusiastic proponents of all things Welsh, and were influential disseminators of discourses of a particularist ethno-linguistic Welshness. These nationalistic groups, however, differed from the radical Jacobin nationalism of the earlier century in that, through their conservativism, they were largely disapproving of the political radicalism that was becoming increasingly prevalent in the nineteenth century.

The Welsh language was a particular casualty of the Liberal hegemony. Many Liberal intellectuals in Wales, adopting *laissez-faire* liberal values, believed in the primacy of the right of individuals to compete economically against one another (Brooks, 2015: 66). Opposition to nationalism defined in parochial ethnic and linguistic terms stemmed from this discourse (Brooks, 2015: 80). This ideology was strongly opposed to all those things that would stand in the way of an individual's capacity to compete economically (Brooks, 2015: 66). The Welsh language was articulated by this discourse as a barrier to economic prosperity, and its continuing decline was seen as desirable.

[19] Brooks gives the example of Welsh clergy working in England, who took issue with the way that English clergy were assigned to Wales, and Welsh clergy to England, meaning the Welsh weren't preached to in their own language, and saw the treatment of the Welsh as exploitative (Brooks, 2015: 53). These clergymen published annual calls for equality between the Welsh and English languages (2015: 53).

In 1847, the Royal Commission into the state of education in Wales published its infamous Blue Books Report; an incident in Welsh social history which captured shifting British and Liberal attitudes towards the Welsh language and culture (Brooks, 2015: 136). The Report had been commissioned in response to the rise of religious nonconformity and the social unrest and rioting which was rife throughout Wales (Morgan, 1996: 92). The Blue Books Report 'attributed what it presented as gross Welsh ignorance, backwardness and immorality to the principality's retention of the Welsh language, and its insufficient familiarity with the supposedly civilizing , improving effects of the English language' (Aaron, 2005: 153; Carter, 2010: 62; Roberts, 1998: 238). It attributed the 'backwardness and immorality of the people (especially the women) to the influence of [religious] dissent and the Welsh language' (Morgan, 1996: 92). Brooks argues that the report demonstrates various liberal themes, particularly that the Welsh language was a hindrance to the advancement of secular knowledge, as the 'emphasis of the Welsh on religion and theology was an example of a separate ethnic group turning in on itself' (Brooks, 2015: 78). Thus it told the Welsh that 'the distinctive features which gave themselves, their community and their country a separate identity – most notably their language – were irredeemably inferior, backward, and barbaric, and should be discarded as objects of shame and guilt' (Roberts, 1998: 238).

There was, however, an outcry against the report's findings, and as Williams writes, there followed a surge of national feeling as a 'form of Welsh nationalism, peculiarly Dissenter and Welsh speaking, was stung into life' (Williams, 1985: 208; Morgan, 1996: 92). The report has come to be known in Welsh national mythology as the Treachery of the Blue Books, an often touted example of English imperial practices against Wales and the Welsh (Bohata, 2004: 9-10). According to Prys Morgan, the mass public protest meetings and the growth in journalism and the dissemination of public opinion regarding the Blue Books Report created influential public figures that led Radical Wales in the 1860s (Morgan, 1991: 224). And indeed for many public figures who rose to prominence in this period, the Blue Books Report had lit a fire in them, sharpening their concern and appreciation for their nation (Jenkins, 1991: 123).

This nationalism, however, was a kind of nationalism which existed within the liberal hegemony of Welsh speaking, nonconformist Wales. It was nationalism, therefore, in a specific form; a Welsh national consciousness, a kind of linguistic and cultural nationalism, understood through the lens of liberal Britishness. Williams writes that the popular nationalism of the mid nineteenth century, serviced by the increasingly popular Eisteddfodau, and buoyed by the popularity of folk songs, constructed for the Welsh language and Welsh-language culture a particular space in relation to the English language and culture (Williams, 1985: 188). Welsh language culture, 'while it celebrated Welsh … and sanctified the Welsh as a peculiarly religious and law-abiding people', was being relegated to a 'peculiar and particular role… as distinct from the English of business and success. It locked Welsh up in a particular world which was rapidly becoming marginal' (Williams, 1985: 210). It produced for the language, Williams states, a position as subaltern (Williams, 1985: 210).

Despite condemnation of the report by many, its damning judgement of Welsh society was experienced by many as a further official reiteration of the kind of liberal discourse which was rearticulating Welshness. Many came to internalise the discourse of the Welsh language as a backwards tongue and a hindrance to business and progress (Brooks, 2015: 68-70). Morgan writes that the Welsh went to great lengths to 'answer the criticisms of the commissioners by becoming more like the English, by turning themselves into practical, hardheaded, businesslike English-speaking Britains' (Morgan, 1996: 93). 'Many are the tales', Harold Carter writes, 'of Welsh people anxiously attempting to lose their accents in order to pass as English, essentially to sacrifice identity' (Carter, 2010: 62).

The Nonconformist elite of Wales, then, developed a complex relationship with the Welsh language. Davies writes that 'from the midst of the vitality of Welsh-language activity in the period 1850-1880 came a deluge of statements voicing the conviction – occasionally, indeed, the hope – that the lifespan of the Welsh language was swiftly drawing to a close' (Davies, 2007: 408). Prominent Nonconformist and Liberal intellectuals come to advocate the learning of English, as Nonconformism 'had an

unshakeable belief in competition'[20] (Davies, 2007: 408). Many advocated the abandonment of Welsh, arguing that 'it is better for commerce, education and religion the fewer languages there are in the world' (Brooks, 2015: 65). Samuel Roberts, an influential Welsh language writer and proponent of *laissez faire* liberalism, by mid-century was advocating allowing the language to perish (Brooks, 2015: 69). Thus while Welsh largely remained the language of the common people, English increasingly became the language of the elites (Davies, 2007: 409).

The middle class elites, which increasingly came to lead the Nonconformist church, became committed to Britishness, as they were in a position to become members of a British middle-class with the benefits, social mobility and prestige associated with it (Davies, 2007: 409, Brooks, 2015: 137). A period of institution-building in late nineteenth century Wales demonstrates the position of the Welsh nonconformist and Liberal elite in relation to Welshness and Britishness. These elites, like the influential educational promoted and reformer Hugh Owen, led a movement to furnish the Welsh nation with civic institutions and public bodies that were standard features for a modern nation. These public bodies are what Logfren terms the 'international cultural grammar of nationhood', or the 'cultural ingredients needed to form a nation' (Logfren in Mason, 2004: 20). Yet as Brooks points out, these public bodies reinforced a kind of "British" Wales through bringing the Welsh nation closer to the British state (Brooks, 2015: 84). The respectability desired through establishing these institutions was to be gained through imitating English middle class civil society and British civic institutions.

The effect of this period of civic nationalism and British liberalism was the further promotion of Anglicisation and the continuing relegation the Welsh language and culture from public life to the private sphere. Hugh Owen, for example,

> shared the belief, common to radicals … that the Welsh language represented a problem to be solved, rather than a redoubt to be defended. He never taught his sons Welsh. (Williams, 1982: 161)

[20] Brooks writes that the independent minister Kilsby Jones, addressing an audience at an Eisteddfod, stated: 'cling to the Welsh language on Sunday … but when comes Monday morning, I advise you to learn English, as she is the language of commerce' (Brooks, 2015: 65).

Such was the influence of the idea of English modernity and progress that by the 1870s very few of the Welsh bourgeoisie were passing on the Welsh language to their children (Brooks, 2015: 23). The late nineteenth century had seen the use of the 'Welsh Not' as the majority of schools in Wales focused on teaching English, even in Welsh speaking areas (Roberts, 1998: 33). In the new Universities which were formed in Wales, first in Aberystwyth in 1872 and later in Cardiff and Bangor, English was the language of instruction[21] (Brooks, 2015: 84). Through focusing on English education, it was intended that those from Wales should be able to compete with their English counterparts (Brooks, 2015: 85). Such beliefs demonstrate the continuation of the thought which lay behind the Blue Books report; an implicit commitment to progress, modernity and entrepreneurialism uninhibited by language barriers, but the effect of such beliefs, Brooks argues, was the continuing Anglicisation of Wales. Thus while the language continued to be a significant part of the Welsh experience in the nineteenth century, it was English language and culture that was considered most important (Brooks, 2015: 136).

Liberal Nationalism and the Collapse of the Liberal Hegemonic Bloc

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, the discourse of the Welsh people as Liberal and nonconformist was hegemonic, reinforced by Liberal political success. Electorally, the Liberal party would by 1884 assume giant stature in Welsh life (Williams, 1985: 226). This notion of Welshness as Liberal, nonconformist and inherently rural was rooted in the discourse of the gwerin. This discourse represented a mythologised view of Welsh society as the most God-fearing people, 'bound to the countryside by ties of language, blood and faith' (Adamson, 1999: 58), and 'cultivated … often self-educated, responsible, self-disciplined, respectable but on the whole genially poor and perhaps small propertied people' (Williams, in Williams, 1999: 78; Morgan, 1986: 36). Furthermore, the gwerin was presented as 'constant in their

[21] Wales did not have its first lecturer in the Welsh language until 1889, and even then, after his appointment to this position at Bangor University John Morris-Jones had at first no students to teach (Morgan, 1998: 20).

support … for the liberal or radical political cause', and 'the most classless and egalitarian in spirit' (Morgan, 1986: 36; Ellis, 1996: 273).

The gwerin produced an idealistic imagining of a classless Welsh community that in fact was far more diverse, fructuous and heterogeneous than the notion of the gwerin let on. Adamson argues that this discursive construct served an ideological purpose in that it obscured 'the internal class tensions between the working class and the Nonconformist elite' (Adamson, 1999: 59). The gwerin circulated a particular discourse in which the Welsh nation was articulated through what was supposedly held in common by both the middle classes and the rural peasantry, such as the language, culture, religion and radical Liberalism (Adamson, 1999: 59). It was a discourse that emphasised a romantic essential Welshness in opposition to Anglicisation and urban-industrial development (Gruffudd, 1999: 151).

The discourse of the gwerin gave to the rural masses a powerful articulation of national distinction and identity, such that even within the Liberal party in Wales, a period of strengthened Welsh cultural nationalism emerged which is seen by many as a 'rebirth of a nation' (Morgan, 1998). The 1880s saw the election of a newer generation of Welsh intellectuals in the likes of Tom Ellis and Lloyd George, Liberal MPs who thought in a Welsh national context, rather than a British Liberal context (Morgan, 1998: 33). This decade saw agitation for political matters directly concerning Wales, such as attempts to disestablish the church from the British state in the 1880s, which forced Liberals to 'prove that Wales was an entity which could reasonably demand separate legislation … [and] insist that the Welsh were a nation' (Davies, 2007: 422). In 1888, a Welsh Party was established within the Liberal party in Westminster, and the short lived *Cymru Fydd* movement, led by Lloyd George, and drawing inspiration from Irish home rule movements, advocated self-government for Wales (Morgan, 1998: 35). This nationalist Liberal movement was a cultural nationalism, one in which, 'the history, traditions, social culture, literature, and political institutions … would be organically linked' (Morgan, 1998: 113). However, as influential as this nationalism was, it was still Liberal in character, and was articulated as 'liberal, not nationalist' (Brooks, 2004: 18), couching its political objectives and reasoning in the language of liberal values. Brooks reminds us that these nationalists,

such as Lloyd George and Tom Ellis, were nonetheless able to reach the upper echelons of government after the failure of the *Cymru Fydd* movement[22].

This nationalistic movement which continued into the twentieth century, was nonetheless a form of national revival, and it emphasised the idyllic gwerin and the Celtic past which had been resurrected over a century earlier. In line with the kind of nation-building that was occurring throughout Europe, a new range of national symbols was excavated from the past and were enshrined in the national landscape through their public use. *Eisteddfodau* were showcases for a 'heraldry of culture', and were adorned with a panoply of symbols, from red dragons and the Three Feathers of the Princes of Wales to leeks and invented Druidic runes and symbols (Morgan, 1986: 33). These powerful discursive devices through which common Welsh people could visualise and consume their nation spread across the new, official, civic Wales of the twentieth century. The Three Feathers became the symbols of the Welsh Rugby Union (Williams, 1985: 221). Cardiff's new City Hall, opened in 1904, was adorned with statues of Welsh and Celtic heroes, from saints and warriors to princes (Morgan, 1986: 37). A Welsh National Museum opened in 1907, a significant institution in any process of nation-building such that it acts as a 'formalization of national memory' (Adamson, 1999: 61), and is a 'means of announcing the 'arrival' of a nation at a certain level of cultural or educational sophistication' (Mason, 2005: 11). The investiture of the Prince of Wales in Caernarfon in 1911, for which Lloyd George was responsible, was 'an astounding display of wonderful ceremonial and bad history, [with] all the clichés of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rolled into one, royal ceremonial full of plumes and dragons, druids and bards, Welsh regiments, Welsh choirs, [and] hundreds of girls in red cloaks and tall black hats' (Morgan, 1986: 38). Yet the investiture, argues ap Gareth, through its 'emotional sentimentality' served to place 'a limit upon Welsh nationalism to the cultural sphere', and sought to emphasise a 'feeling of deserved partnership with the rest of Britain' (2010: 40-41).

[22] Indeed Morgan points out that the chairmen of the Welsh Party in Parliament were 'elderly, unimaginative, and conformist', adding that 'the Liberal whips could sleep quietly at nights if the Welsh were in the hands of men such as these' (1998: 32).

Morgan writes that this nationalism restored a self-confidence to a Welsh nation, a 'nation less tormented, more secure, more at peace with itself and a wider world' (1998: 122). The Welsh language and Welsh-language culture had re-gained confidence for a brief period as the Liberal giants of Lloyd George and Tom Ellis articulated a Welsh-Liberal discourse which drew upon the notion of the gwerin, giving voice to a romantic, self-image of the Nonconformist nation-popular. The articulation of the "nation" in this period was therefore multi-layered and complex, as cultural and linguistic Welsh identities were strengthened, even to the point of sparking an unsuccessful home rule movement, yet the British nation remained hegemonic as the conceptual context within which political ideologies and social identities were situated.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, the fractures in the experiences of Welshness were becoming especially visible. The intellectuals of this nationalism were representing a rural, Welsh-speaking and numerically declining Wales (Brooks, 2015: 22). Indeed it became clear that the cultural nationalism found within the Liberal party was confined to the north and west of the country; the urban proletariat of the industrial south were experiencing Welshness differently. This divide is no more apparent than in the failure of the *Cymru Fydd* movement to extend into the south, which 'represented most of the population, wealth, and productive capacity of the nation' (Morgan, 1998: 115-116). In April 1885, the *Cymru Fydd* League formally merged with the North Wales Liberal Federation, yet it became clear that 'the south, or more especially the ports of Swansea, Barry, Cardiff, and Newport … diverged in outlook from the rest of the principality' (Morgan, 1998: 116). Hostility to the idea of home rule resulted in Liberals dropping the notion to attempt to patch up the gulf between the south and the rest of the country (Morgan, 1998: 118). Morgan writes that the response of one Cardiff Liberal politician and businessman to the *Cymru Fydd* movement was to declare that 'Liberalism was more important than Welshness', and that 'the cosmopolitan population of the south-east would never submit to the domination of Welsh ideas' (1998: 118).

The outlook of the industrial south in particular, then, was characterised by the hegemony of British Liberal discourses; a position which encouraged an identification with the British Empire and Liberal politics within it. Furthermore, the experiences and lifestyles of the proletariat, urban working-class came to have less and less in common with the experiences of the gwerin. Fractures emerged within the Liberal hegemony in the industrial south. Industrial strife in 1910-1911 between industrial workers and their nonconformist bosses further demonstrated the tension between Liberal elites and the working classes, with Ellis stating that the ideal of the gwerin had cracked with such tensions (Ellis, 1996: 288). The hegemony of the Liberal party in Wales had rested on the ability to draw together 'a rural tenantry, an indigenous bourgeoisie and a nascent working class' (Adamson, 1999: 56). The southern, indigenous bourgeoisie had placed an emphasis on Nonconformism and the language as a basis for national identity and shared interests in order to resist the Anglicisation and secularisation of the working classes (Adamson, 1999: 55). However, by the 1890s, the political orientation of the working classes was shifting towards the politics of socialism and, by the early twentieth century, was, 'in significant ways, defining itself against an established concept of Welshness' (Smith, 1984: 98). Class politics had been dampened by the discourse of the gwerin, through which industrial communities had been articulated through rural imagery, and which produced the Welsh people as classless and 'free of the conflicts associated with industrialization' (Adamson, 1999: 58). The working-classes, however, had become Anglicised and secularised as a result of in-migration, and turned towards radical, secular, syndicalist, Marxist and socialist ideals (Adamson, 1999: 59).

Liberalism and the labourist movement in their own ways both 'had ideological dimensions that … claimed Welshness and the Welsh as their own' (Jones, 1992: 341). Necessary for the working-classes to assert their Welshness was the replacement of the hegemony of the gwerin and Liberalism, such that Socialist Wales could become the Welsh nation (Williams, 1985: 240-241). However, the commitment to a British Labour movement had much the same effect as British Liberalism, in that nationalistic expression, when it appeared, took a civic form, couched within a wider commitment to Britishness. Williams argues that this was a period of *Imperial Wales* (1985). The

self-confidence of the period was 'safely lodged as a major directive element within imperial Britain' (Williams, 1985: 221). This self-confidence would not last, as the economic buoyancy of the period of Imperial Wales was followed by economic hardship and decline.

Industrial and Twentieth Century Wales

The dominant cultural identity found in Wales in the twentieth century was that of industrial, working-class Wales. Membership to this community was gained not through expressing any particular Welsh characteristics but through, as Jones argues, fierce commitment to a cause (Jones, 1992: 342). Though the identity was based around politics, class and employment, it nonetheless manifested as a strong local and regional identity which became closely associated with the south Wales coalfields and industrial towns (Roberts, 1999: 115-116). It was in this sense, at least, a Welsh identity. Indeed the imagery of Wales, particularly to its neighbours, came to be associated with the culture of its industrial regions, and especially mining communities, with male voice choirs and rugby being prominent among Welsh stereotypes (Adamson, 1999: 65). The dominance of this working-class Welsh identity within perceptions of Wales was due to the sheer size of the industrial sector of the Welsh economy and its vast employment[23].

With Labour gaining electoral domination in Wales from the early 1920s (Jones, 1992: 344), the nature of Welsh politics became resolutely British. Labour 'could not hope and did not intend to re-create that kind of Welsh-national formation' writes Williams (1985: 273). The politics of working-class communities, influenced by international socialism and later the Labour movement, became synonymous with the politics and universal values of collectivism (Jones, 1992: 341). In a similar vein to Liberalism, the emerging working class industrial identity had at its core an internationalist and outward-looking perspective which did not necessarily (or rather, explicitly) take the

[23] At the end of the First World War, there were as many as 250,000 miners employed in Wales (Smith, 1984: 154), and by 1921, one in every three males were employed in the mining or quarrying industries (Jones, 1992: 345).

nation as a frame of reference nor as a political and social entity of great significance. As Brooks argues, socialism and Labourism shared the same Enlightenment roots as British Liberalism (Brooks, 2015: 116). Furthermore, Jones argues that the Labour movement, even more so than Liberalism, emphasised the 'primacy of international class obligations and duties' (Jones, 1992: 341). The Labour movement in Wales had little interest in specifically Welsh policies or institutions (Jones, 1992: 341). Coupled with this was the increasing Anglicisation, caused by an influx of incomers that could not be linguistically assimilated, and the emergence of an Americanised global cultural hegemony that would shape popular culture (Williams, 1985: 246).

Labour politics was built upon a kind of implicit British nationalism. McCrone states that the corporatist ideology behind the Labour movement was implicitly nationalistic because it was politically legitimized through the mobilisation of the national interest in the pursuit of given economic ends, and because it was a collectivist system in which the collectivity in question was the nation (McCrone in Bond, McCrone & Brown, 2003: 372). Indeed this un-recognition of British nationalism is made possible to a large extent through articulating the irrational 'other', in this instance the Celtic fringe, as nationalists (Billig, 1995: 15-16). A false distinction is thus upheld between the 'nationalism' found in others and 'patriotism' or 'loyalty', both of which nonetheless imply a kind of emotional and psychological attachment to a nation (Billig, 1995: 16). Indeed a sign of the hegemony of British nationalism was the common sense status it enjoyed, it was normalised and legitimized and seemed wholly natural (Wyn Jones, 2007: 26). Thus British Socialist and Labourist discourses have within them an inherent nationalism, which 'places borders for the political community' (Wyn Jones, 2007: 35, my translation).

By mid-century, there was a distinct lack of a cohesive Welsh national identity, which led Balsom in 1985 to divide the nation into three distinct geographical communities: British Wales, Welsh Wales and *Y Fro Cymraeg* (Balsom, 1985). The validity of this model has been challenged by Wyn Jones and Scully (2012) who demonstrated that these distinctions in identities are neither geographically nor politically clear nor

distinct[24]. Yet it captured the feeling that Wales lacked cohesion. Very little disseminated to the public the idea or notion of a singular or homogenous Welsh nation. An exception was rugby, described by Harries as a 'substitute for nationalism' (Harries, 2008: 303). Unlike politics, religion, culture and language, the Welsh rugby team could embody a national uniformity and unity which transcended the stark diversity of experiences of Welshness (Harries, 2007: 151). Indeed the term 'eighty minute patriots' describes how such passionate support for a national team stood in stark difference to a lack of confidence in the Welsh nation, and the relative weakness and limitations of various Welsh identities (Harries, 2008: 303; Johnes, 2000: 105).

The fractures in linguistic, cultural and national identifications were most evident in the latter half of the twentieth century. Following the Second World War, a 'whole generation of the Welsh moved into … an unprecedented integration into British society' (Williams, 1985: 286). This was due to the communal suffering and experiences of the Two World Wars, an intensification of British state apparatuses such as the NHS and the welfare state, and the arrival of radio, television and state-wide media institutions such as the BBC. Y Fro Cymraeg – Welsh-speaking areas of the rural North and mid-Wales – though experiencing a decline in speakers and Nonconformity, retained a distinct Welsh identity, and continued to organise and resist its marginalisation through establishing Welsh language organisations such as the *Urdd Gobaith Cymru*, and establishing the National Eisteddfod as a monolingual festival; an 'anomaly which closed the national festival of the Welsh to four-fifths of the inhabitants of Wales' (Williams, 1985: 286). The cultural and linguistic nationalism of the *gwerin* had, since the 1930s, come to be enshrined in Plaid Cymru – a party that became increasingly political in its activities as the twentieth century wore on (Adamson, 1999: 59-60). As the Welsh language and the culture of the imagined community of the gwerin declined under pressure from Anglicised and British-Welsh identities, Plaid Cymru was established by a number of Welsh intellectuals in order to secure the linguistic, cultural and moral future of the Welsh nation (Jones and Fowler,

[24] Additionally, an examination of survey evidence by Coupland et al. (2006), found that 'where you live in Wales … does not significantly predict a level of Welshness' (2006: 21).

2007: 93). It initially embodied the ideals that had characterised the gwerin, with its founder Saunders Lewis being an ardent advocate of the deindustrialisation of Wales and a return to a rural idyll (Smith, 1984: 157; Gruffudd, 1999: 159). His political views are described by Wyn Jones (2007: 88) as romantic conservativism, and indeed they embody a particularism which stands in contrast to the universalising ideologies of Liberalism and Socialism.

Plaid Cymru's agenda shifted from an early linguistic and cultural conservativism to a greater focus on an outlook which would bring it electoral success. Having been influenced by members who argued that engaging with the English-speaking Welsh should be the party's most important mission (Wyn Jones, 2007: 86, 104), Plaid Cymru began to challenge Labour in some of its industrial heartlands of south Wales using the language of the left. By 1979, the party 'adopted a more conventional and familiar political terminology by locating itself on the 'left' of the political spectrum' (Wyn Jones, 2007: 184, my translation). Thus *Plaid Cymru*'s movement into the largely Anglophone industrial parts of Wales, and its adoption of a left-wing political stance are indicative of the kind of consensual coalition-forming character of a hegemonic project, whereby organic intellectuals attempt to challenge a hegemonic discourse through affecting the world-views of the people, which is achieved through adopting parts of the world-view, culture and aspirations of the nation-popular in order to form a hegemonic bloc.

Despite the limited political success of *Plaid Cymru*, the continuing hegemony of the British nation and the lack of confidence of Welsh national consciousnesses is highlighted by the devolution referendum of 1979. Labour was driven to concede the referendum as, weakened and caught up in the worst economic crisis since the 1930s, it was forced to make deals with minority parties and individual MPs (Jones, 1983: 28). The proposed devolution was strongly opposed by many in the Labour party, including Unionists like Neil Kinnock (Wyn Jones, 2007: 22), who argued that 'the Assembly debate represented a distraction from the main objectives of the British Labour movement since it would tend to excite regional loyalties that would only serve to weaken the unity of the working class' (Jones and Wilford, 1983: 131). The referendum was overwhelming rejected by the Welsh people by a ratio of four to

one[25]. It demonstrated Welshness for very many sat comfortably within Britishness, and that for the vast majority of Welsh people there was 'little distinction between the political consequence of Welsh national identity and British national identity' (Davies, 2006: 108). The ease with which the north/south, Welsh-speaking/English-speaking divide – and fears by either of dominance by the other – had been exploited by those campaigning against devolution further highlighted the fractured nature of Welsh identities (Jones and Wilford, 1983: 125).

The defeat was, for those who had hoped devolution could bring greater nation self-confidence, a devastating blow. But the 1980s would prove to be a time of instability and flux for Welsh self-conceptions. It would introduce a period of 'structural indetermination', as it was termed by Laclau (1990: 44). A series of factors opened up space for Welshness to be rearticulated. A key factor was a decade and a half of Conservative government which resulted in a protracted battle between industrial Wales and a hostile Westminster government (Davies, 2006: 116-117). The Thatcher government's commitment to restructuring the economy away from heavy industry brought to an end the tradition of mining and heavy industry in Wales. This had significant implications for how entire regions of Wales expressed their long-held social and economic identities. As Jones writes, the pit closures 'punctured a whole nexus of images and self-images of the Welsh, clichés as well as genuine human achievements, which seemed to have been inextricably bound up with coal mining and a small number of other industries' (Jones, 1992: 349).

Thatcherism and the end of heavy industry in Wales changed the meaning of notions of Britishness and Welshness that had been so hegemonic, and opened up the space for new national discourses. Through the undermining the institutions and traditions of the British nation-state, changing what it was to be British, and the pervasiveness of the perception that Wales was being victimised by a Westminster government hostile to it, this period led to a strengthened framing of the communities engaged in industrial and protest action as specifically Welsh (Bradbury & Andrews, 2010: 235; Johnes, 2012: 331; Bond, McCrone & Brown, 2003: 372). As Johnes writes, Welsh

[25] Only '6.7 per cent of the country's electorate voted 'Yes'' (Jones and Wilford, 1983: 136).

iconography adorned the banners and posters of the strike and protest movements (2012: 332). Despite relative Conservative electoral success in much of Wales, different Welsh communities found a common enemy in Thatcher's government, and she came to symbolise the divide between Wales and England (Osmond, 2013). As Welshness drifted more centrally within the social identities of industrial Wales in particular, a gap was closing between the fractured communities in Wales. These conditions of the 1980s initiated a process which would lead to another referendum on devolution in 1997 which would deliver a devolved National Assembly for Wales.

Post-Devolution Wales: The National Assembly for Wales

Devolution occurred at a time when the particular configuration of the Welsh economy, which had sustained such a strong working class identity and the divide between industrial and rural Wales, was undergoing a significant change. As Chaney writes, devolution would always have spurred on an introspection and preoccupation with national identity, as Wales is after all a 'small but highly self-conscious nation' (2015: 311). It occurred at a time when the political, social and cultural landscape of the Welsh nation was in a state of flux, where there was a particularly evident discontinuity in how national identities were articulated. The decline and collapse of the industrial sector had, as Jones states, left a particular Welsh industrial identity with 'roots dangling, unwatered, in the atomized service economy of the 1980s and 1990s' (Jones, 1992: 350). Space opened up for new ways for communities and individuals to articulate their social identities. When conducting research in the south Wales valleys in 1998-99, Roberts found that given the 'traditional portrait of the South Wales Valleys as having dominant mining and class identities', the 'strength of feeing of Welshness was a surprise' (Roberts, 1999: 115). Indeed Roberts argues that identities in these communities were undergoing a re-formation, and, citing Adamson, explains that a 'new working class' is emerging which 'expresses a new Welsh identity separate from traditional political practices' (Adamson in Roberts, 1999: 115).

Devolution also occurred within a period of renewed optimism in Wales (Harries, 2007: 152). There was the *Cool Cymru* effect of the early late 1990s and early 2000s, where a number of Welsh pop and rock bands became popular across the United Kingdom. As Harries explains, bands such as Catatonia, The Stereophonics and Manic Street Preachers 'gave Wales an increased visibility and credibility within the popular realm' (Harries, 2007: 152). The opening of the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff along with the hosting of the 1999 Rugby World Cup played into the dissemination of a particular, confident discourse of the Welsh nation (Aaron & Williams, 2005: xvi). The tournament opened with a performance from Bryn Terfel and Shirley Bassey; one a Welsh-speaking singer from North Wales, the other a black, Welsh singer from Cardiff, wearing the Welsh flag. The role of rugby in Welsh national identities is significant, as it has long been one dispositif which could bring together disparate groups in Wales (Johnes, 2012: 280-285). The ultramodern Millennium stadium, opened in 1999, is a symbolic embodiment of a modern, confident Wales, and is the site of regular fervent and colourful expressions and performances of Welsh nationhood. It was into this national context that the Welsh Assembly entered. Devolution, although passed by the slimmest of margins by referendum[26], fostered a new round of nation-building, created new civic institutions, enabled certain issues to be viewed in terms of 'national' issues (Mooney and Williams, 2006: 608), and sharpened the distinction between a specifically Welsh civil and civic sphere and those of the British nation-state[27]. The Senedd building which houses the National Assembly for Wales is itself strikingly modernist, and acts as a permanent symbolic representation of democratic and modern Wales.

Returning to the contemporary context in which national subjectivities are constructed and reproduced, to what extent do these past divisions and fractures still shape the nature of Welsh national "identities?" The advancement of a civic, inclusive and multicultural Welshness since devolution is an attempt to bridge ethnic, linguistic, cultural, class, racial and national divisions through emphasising a citizenship 'open to

[26] The referendum was passed by only 6721 votes (Scully, 2012).

[27] Welsh civil society was very weak at the advent of the National Assembly for Wales, with Welsh civil society always having been developed within an English and British context (Paterson & Wyn Jones, 1999: 173).

everybody who chooses to be here' (Thomas cited in Guidici, 2012: 231). However, despite this notion of a more united Wales and Welshness, other discourses of Welshness persist and shape how Wales is viewed by its peoples and groups. To Raymond Williams's distinction between 'the more enclosed, mainly rural, more Welsh-speaking west and north', and the socialist industrial Wales, Coupland et al. add further discourses of Welshness that have emerged more recently in the form of a 'Welsh-speaking elite Wales', a 'European waterfront Wales' and of course the civic 'one Wales' imagined in *Iaith Pawb* (Williams, 2003: 3; Coupland et al., 2006: 3).

A question that can be asked is the extent to which this rhetoric of civic inclusivity and multiculturalism has been successful in rearticulating Welshness? To what extent have they challenged discourses of Welshness which are rooted in linguistic, ethnic, cultural, class and political identities? Public discourses espoused especially by politicians and academics may have a limited influence over how individuals and groups in Wales understand and articulate Welshness. For example, while the Welsh Assembly has also provided the space for Welshness to be defined through notions of citizenship, the impact of this political sphere on the population can be overstated. An early study of attitudes towards Assembly Elections (2003) found people had 'little or no awareness of what is discussed in the Assembly', with 'very few … being aware of who their AM is' (The Electoral Commission, 2003: 43). Indeed Johnes argues that the Welsh civil society organisations that have come into existence since devolution had 'made little impact on the consciousness of the majority of people', and that there was a public indifference towards the Assembly (Johnes, 2012: 424).

The engagement with notions of a civic Welshness will be a theme examined more closely in the empirical chapters of this thesis, however some authors have investigated this very notion of Welsh civic inclusivity. In his study of how the Welsh-Italian community in Wales engages with notions of inclusive and civic Welshness, Guidici found that 'the Italians appear to have responded with indifference' (Guidici, 2012: 242). The Welsh-Italians still largely associated Welshness with cultural and linguistic factors, and in such a conceptualisation of Welshness, their association of Welshness with the Welsh language 'deterred some Italians from claiming a Welsh identity' (Guidici, 2012: 242). A study of Welsh identities in Porthcawl by Evans (2014)

demonstrated that local people negotiate with what he refers to as a 'discursive hierarchy of Welshness', wherein two 'idealised images of Welshness' are prevalent; a 'rural, linguistic idea of Welshness on one hand, and an industrial, working class Welshness on the other' (Evans, 2014: 196). Many residents had to deal with the notion of Porthcawl as less Welsh, and as having a thin or diluted notion of Welshness, which stemmed from comparisons between Porthcawl and the stronger Welshness perceived to exist elsewhere (Evans, 2014: 198). Both of these accounts, then, demonstrate the continuing prevalence of linguistic, cultural or industrial discourses in how Welshness in perceived and understood.

Earlier in the chapter, the public discourses on the Welsh language were outlined, with a focus on how the language was articulated within a framework of a civic, inclusive and multicultural Welshness. Despite the prevalence of this discourse within public, political and academic discourses, questions still exist as to the extent to which older linguistic divisions still shape the role of the Welsh language in discourses of Wales and Welshness. In other words, despite the articulation of the Welsh language as an important part of a common heritage for all of Wales' citizens, to what extent have older perceptions persisted?

There has been a significant change in how the Welsh language is perceived since the last decades of the twentieth century. The Welsh language has gained significant support among even the non-Welsh-speaking people of Wales (Carter, 2010: 94; Statistics for Wales, 2018: 8). In an article written in 1998, Ron Davies, the former Secretary of State for Wales wrote:

> The Welsh language was a hot potato which aroused angst and ire all over Wales. The Welsh language was something you were either 'for' or 'against': there wasn't much room for neutrality. But now that mode of thinking has been largely abandoned. Whether you happen to speak Welsh or not, there is increasingly the view that the language is part of what makes our identity as a nation distinctive and unique. (Davies in Osmond, 1998: 2)

In a poll conducted by the Welsh Language Board in 1996, 96 per cent of the Welsh-speakers and 94 per cent of the non-Welsh-speakers questioned agreed that the number of Welsh speakers should be increased, and 80 per cent of non-Welsh-speakers questioned agreed that more opportunities to use the language should be provided (Welsh Language Board, 1996: 2-3). The Welsh Language Commissioner's 5-Year Report 2012-2015 stated that '[a]ttitudes towards the Welsh language amongst the population of Wales are very positive, with 85 per cent believing that the Welsh language is something to be proud of and 86 per cent feeling that the Welsh language is important to Welsh culture' (Welsh Language Commissioner, 2016: 17). Roberts, in his study of two Valleys communities in south Wales, found that the 'language issue was keenly felt', and that it was a significant topic of discussion during the research (Roberts, 1999: 122). His text demonstrates that the respondents, though not Welsh-speaking, expressed fondness and pride towards the language, a regret over its past treatment, and a sense of ownership over it (Roberts, 1999: 122-123). A study by Cole and Williams into minority language use in Wales and Brittany found that identification with a language does not necessarily presuppose an ability to speak the language (2004: 571). This was certainly the case with Brittany, and also true, though less resolutely, for Wales (2004: 571). They found that 'the Welsh population generally accepts that the Welsh language should be seen as a symbol of Welsh identity', and that 'a majority accepts that Wales needs to train more Welsh-language speakers to occupy new posts' (Cole and Williams, 2004: 571).

However, despite attempts to present the Welsh language as an aspect of civic Welshness, there remain issues over the role and place of the language in Welsh national identities. As a recent storm over the medium of education in a village primary school demonstrated, the Welsh language as an issue can still spark divisive and heated contention, and a local issue can spark a national debate around the place of the language in Wales and Welsh identity (Tickle & Morris, 2017). Indeed in its earliest years the National Assembly for Wales was the forum for an antagonistic clash between Welsh language activists, Welsh nationalists and Welsh Labour (Brooks, 2006). The former were accused of racism, fascism and a kind of ethnic particularism by many in the Labour party and the English-language south Wales-based Welsh

media, on account of their support for the Welsh language and their voiced concerns over in-migration of non-Welsh speakers into Welsh-speaking heartlands (Brooks, 2006). Brooks writes that the dissemination of this discourse of Welsh nationalists as racist stemmed from a strategic need to counter nationalist electoral success:

> There seems at some point following the first Assembly Elections to have been a strategic decision by Labour to play the 'Orange card' of Welsh politics, that of presenting Welsh-language 'extremism' as a threat to the English-speaking population. (Brooks, 2006: 146-147)

Thus linguistic and political divisions in Wales were stirred up even recently. The Welsh language can therefore still be a source of contention in how the Welsh nation and Welshness are defined.

Indeed the conditions still exist for the language to be a source of divisiveness and exclusion. It is spoken by only 19 per cent of the Welsh population (Office for National Statistics, 2012), with some constituencies in Wales such as Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil reporting in the 2011 census that as few as 7.8 and 8.9 per cent of their respective populations were Welsh speakers (StatsWales, 2012). While the elites of the Welsh political arena have framed the language in inclusive terms, it can also be potentially exclusive to those who do not speak it, and can challenge the legitimacy of Welsh identities in which there is little place for the Welsh language. For example, Bowie, writing in 1993, stated that

> for the 80 per cent the population for whom Welsh is a foreign language any definition of Welshness which gives priority to the Welsh language poses a potential threat to their own sense of identity. (Bowie, 1993: 169)

It can represent 'another' Wales, one from which people and communities are excluded (Roberts, 1999: 123). This can establish hierarchies of identities (Bohata, 2004: 111), and can be a significant source of contention due to the insinuation that non-Welsh-speakers are somehow less Welsh. As was seen above, many of the Welsh-Italians studies by Guidici implicitly associated Welshness with the language, which in turn deterred some from claiming a Welsh national identity (Guidici, 2012:

242). In her 2002 memoir, Charlotte Williams recounts feeling that the Welsh language movement, this 'great movement for Wales', 'wasn't taking us all along with it', and recounted experiencing the sentiment that to be Welsh meant Welsh-speaking (2002: 171). Thus Bradbury and Andrews describe the Welsh language's role in Welsh identity as 'simultaneously exclusive and inclusive in its effects' (Bradbury & Andrews, 2010: 231); inclusive because it can be framed an element of a Welsh heritage which belongs to all, and exclusive in that it can establish linguistic boundaries, and notions of Welshness which people feel unable to claim. Therefore, despite the rhetoric a civic Welshness, it vies for hegemony with existing discourses of Welshness which persist.

The civic notion of Welshness as a framework for the language has also been criticised for marginalising existing notions of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking (Brooks, 2009). The policy of institutional bilingualism – which, among other things, gives Welsh and English legal parity – has been criticised for maintaining the hegemony of the English language. Brooks, for example, argues that official bilingualism does little to address the imbalance in the social capital between languages, nor address the *de facto* privileging of English such that the Welsh language must still defer to the English language as a social norm (Brooks, 2013).

Furthermore, as occurred in the early years of the National Assembly for Wales, the discourse of an inclusive, multicultural Wales has been used to attack minority linguistic groups in Wales. Some have criticised the rhetoric of inclusivity as potentially marginalising Welsh-language identities, making Welsh-language issues a low priority, and reinforcing the Anglophone hegemony (Brooks, 2009, see Davies, 2010: 181-182; and Evans, 2014: 137-138). Language groups and linguistic identities have a complex relationship with notions of exclusivity and inclusivity, as minority language advocates are often painted as racist, ethno-centric and insular. Welsh-language activism and linguistic nationalism is 'othered' as an illegitimate "ethnic" nationalism, contrasted against a legitimate civic nationalism. It was argued above that the distinction between ethnic and civic is problematic, yet it is an impactful discourse. As Williams writes, 'even supporters of linguistic difference will tend to conceive of the speakers of the Celtic languages as belonging to an ethnic minority …

with English functioning as the civic language, as the universal language in which a multicultural society communicates' (Williams, 2015: 157). However, despite the reimagining of the Welsh language as an element of a civic Wales by many, Brooks has argued that discourses of civic inclusivity in post-devolution Wales still demonstrate antipathy towards what is positioned and thus perceived as exclusive language-based identities (Brooks, 2009: 3). In other words, civic inclusivity becomes a tool to attack and marginalise a Welsh-language identity painted as exclusive and ethnic. Brooks goes on to argue that the 'rhetoric of inclusivity began to be used to reconfigure the symbolic markers of Welsh identity in a way that would more easily tally with the non-Welsh-speaking identity of the majority of the population' rather than with the Welsh-speaking minority (Brooks, 2009: 3-4). The problem, then, is that discourses of a civic, inclusive Welshness re-marginalises Welsh-language identities by positioning them as ethnic, exclusive and inherently contradictory to inclusive and multicultural Wales.

Therefore, Wales' historical fractures still have a significant impact on how Wales is discursively reproduced and understood by its people. Notions of a civic Wales are articulated in a complex discursive environment in which multiple notions of Welshness exist, structured through older hierarchies in which certain notions of Welshness retain hegemony (Evans, 2014: 196). The Welsh language, also articulated through a framework of civic inclusivity, and repositioned as a pillar of a multicultural civic Wales, continues to play a complex role in how Wales is discursively represented and understood. It can still be inseparably associated with a particular linguistic and potentially ethnic version of Welshness. Moreover, attempts to de-ethnicise the perceptions of the language and re-locate it at the centre of a civic Welshness have been criticised for marginalising the Welsh-speaking community. Therefore, despite the transformation that the Welsh language has undergone in its role in Welsh life and society, and its new place within the much changed landscape of identities in Wales, its role in conceptualisations of the Welsh nation and in people's national identities is not straightforward nor without contention.

Conclusion

Having outlined the subjectivity-discourse framework in the previous chapter, this chapter has introduced the case study at hand: the Welsh nation. Its aim was to provide the context and background for the national case study to which this thesis applies its theoretical framework. Using a subjectivity-discourse perspective, which approached contemporary and historical Welsh national "identities" as having been shaped by the discursive landscape through which its denizens come to form their self-understanding, this chapter explored various discursive representation of Welshness, the Welsh nation and the Welsh language. It began with the contemporary context, and the prevalence of a broadly civic discourse of Welshness which attempts to overcome historic social fractures. Following this, the chapter explored how Wales' fractured national consciousness came about, with a historical analysis of how the relative hegemony of notions of Welshness, Britishness and other subjectivities in Wales have shaped the national and other identities of its inhabitants. Finally, the chapter inquired into how these fractures may still shape Welsh national subjectivities today. It suggested that the impact of notions of a civic Welshness may be overestimated, that the Welsh language can still be the source of divisions, and that historic images of Wales as either Welsh-speaking or industrial persist. The next chapter, then, will turn to the empirical analysis of the case study at hand. It will be the first of five empirical chapters, in which the subjectivity-discourse framework will be applied to the collected interview data gathered from field work carried out in three regions in Wales. The analysis of this empirical data will explore what insights and observations can be made from a subjectivity-discourse approach into the nature of the national self.

Chapter Four – The Discursive Construction of the Nation

Introduction

The previous chapters have proposed a subjectivity-discourse theoretical framework for studying the national self, and have provided an overview of the Welsh national context. This chapter is the first of five empirical chapters. They present the analysis of the collected empirical data, and are constructed around themes which emerged from the data. Ultimately, in answer to the central research question – as well as the research sub-questions that enquire into the formation and nature of the national self, as well as its ethical and normative dimensions – these empirical chapters will demonstrate the insights that the subjectivity-discourse framework can make into the national self. These chapters will, in turn, cover the following themes: the discursive construction of the nation; the discursive norms and rules through which nationality is understood; the conceptualisation of Welshness in relation to the Welsh language; the ethical dimensions and implications of national subjectivity; and the fleeting and contextual nature of the national self.

In this chapter, the focus will be on how the research participants, through a negotiation with the discursive world around them, come to understand and articulate their national context. This chapter, then, drawing on the notions of discourse and subjectivity set out in chapter two, will provide insights into how participants come to conceptualise, imagine and understand their national contexts. The theme of this chapter – the discursive production of the nation – investigates how participants form or construct their national context and their national selves. Using this framework, this chapter will examine the emptiness of the notion of the nation, and how the "empty" signifiers that are national constructs are populated with meaning, with an emphasis on the operations and processes through which participants construct various notions of different nations. This, then, reflects how they understand their national selves or subjectivities. It thus tests the argument developed in this thesis

that this subjectivity-discourse approach to studying the national self can provide significant and new insight into its nature.

As was argued in the second chapter, national subjectivities derive from the individuals' negotiation with the social and cultural world around them. The meaning through which they make sense of their social existence derives from the individual's relationship to their discursive landscape. In exploring the relationship between the individual and the nation, it is necessary to explore, firstly, how the nation is made sense of, and how the individual negotiates with discursive meaning. The subjectivity-discourse framework posits that the social meanings of the nation are shaped by hegemonic power relations between them, and that this limits how various national constructs can be conceptualised. However, the framework also posits that the nation is an empty signifier, and that as a result, the individual has a degree of agency in how they construct the nation. This chapter will examine this theme; *the discursive construction and understanding of various national constructs*. It will examine how the participants produce and reproduce various discursive constructs such as "the nation," Wales, England, and Great Britain. Drawing on the understanding of discourse put forth in the subjectivity-discourse framework, the chapter will focus on exploring and demonstrating the discursive operations and processes through which the participants create their understanding of their national context. It will be argued that the interview data demonstrates the openness and emptiness of national constructs. A number of observations drawn from the analysis of the data will be outlined which explain how participants produce their understanding of these constructs, through what operations and processes they construct them, and how they populate empty concepts with meaning. It will also be shown, however, that the "openness" of a national construct has limits, and that certain events, in this case the Brexit referendum, can challenge certain discursive articulations through which the nation is understood. In other words, it will be shown that the "openness" of a national construct can be closed or narrowed on occasion, and that this can disrupt or call into question certain national subjectivities that are held by individuals.

The chapter therefore proceeds as follows. Part one examines the participants' understanding of "the nation" in an abstract sense, emphasising the superficiality of

the participants' understanding of the nation as a construct and the ultimate emptiness of it. Secondly, the way that participants discursively reproduce and understand the Welsh nation, as well as other nations, will be analysed. This section will use the interview data to examine how the participants populate and produce various national constructs, and the operations and processes through which they come to give these discursive constructs meaning.

Discourses of the Nation

Before turning to the question of how participants discursively understand various national constructs, their understanding of the nation in abstract can be examined. The nation is a hegemonic construct in the contemporary world, yet it is an empty and "unfixable" concept (Torfing, 1999: 98-99). As was explained in the first chapter of this thesis, it is described by Bowman as 'an imprecise and effective nebulous mythological concept which is, because of that imprecision, open to appropriation by all of its readers' (1994: 144). The significance of this imprecision is that the nation remains a powerful category through which people experience their lives because of this emptiness and openness. The nation 'retains its grip on the imaginary of its population precisely by remaining unfixed' (Bowman, 1994: 144).

The nation certainly had a 'grip' on the lives of a very many of the participants. A large proportion of the participants expressed positive feelings towards "their" nation, such as pride or affection:

> I do feel, at times, I'm fiercely proud of being English. (A, P11)

Yet despite the strength of feeling, and the significance that the nation could play in the lives of participants, very few were able to pin down what the nation was.

Participants were asked what they thought the nation was. Defining the concept of the nation proved to be a difficult question for many. It was expressed in a number of ways. Some described it as a "community" or "a collection of people, hopefully with the same sorts of ideals and things" (A, P7). A number of participants articulated the

nation in terms of that which is shared or held in common by a collection of people, or defined the nation *as* the people (NW, P2; A, P2). One participant explained the nation as a unifying concept:

> It's a people that identify themselves as having something in common with each other mostly because they're from that particular place, yeah, that unifying concept of a big group of people I suppose. (A, P11)

A small number expressed the territorial or geographic dimension of the nation, seeing the nation as a

> collection of people, with a belonging … to a piece of land, I would say, for me, and I think it runs a bit deeper than that, it's a connection, an ownership of the land then, an ownership of the land, … it kind of implies you have to, or your ancestors, have to have some kind of connection with it. (NW, P4)

> I think a nation is a collection of people living roughly in the same area … but not necessarily all thinking the same thing, but rubbing along without too much trouble, so you can think differently, but not actually go to war with the people next door because they think differently, and alternatively, if necessary, all pulling in the same direction for a common good. (A, P8)

Unsurprisingly, many defined the nation through invoking shared characteristics such as culture, language, history, and shared values. A number of participants stated that the nation was a sense of belonging (NW, G1, P4; C, P2; NW, P4). Indeed, this theme of the nation as an emotional or felt phenomenon appeared regularly. One participant had looked up the term "nation" beforehand in a dictionary, but was dissatisfied with its definition of the nation, stating: "…but there was no mention of feeling because it's a feeling" (C, P1).

There was very little mention of the state or of a nation-state, with the vast majority of participants invoking cultural, emotional, sentimental or broadly ethnic definitions. The only clear exception was an answer from a woman born and raised in Germany,

who associated the nation with a kind of "common contract," an "agreement, or constitution" (A, P9). On the whole, nationality was divorced from citizenship and the state whenever the state was mentioned. One participant, in response to a complaint that England and Britain were used synonymously by many in England, stated:

> In Germany or Czech Republic where I lived, or Czechoslovakia, there's always that concept that your nationality might be different from your state, it was there all the time. (C, G1, P3)

Another participant expressed an awareness that nationality in a sub-state national context was something distinct from citizenship:

> In Britain you can be Welsh or, English, without a new passport, but if you want to be French, you have to go to France, well I'm not sure how long, then you can get a passport, so is it something legal, or something with culture and language? (NW, G1, P2)

Many participants expressed how difficult a question this was, and often, their answers were preceded with a long pause. Few participants seemed satisfied with their answers, with many participants apologising for not being able to give a better or more complete answer. The difficulty that participants had in formulating an answer to the question attests to the nation's 'imprecise' nature as a 'nebulous mythological concept' (Bowman, 1994: 144). A small number of participants recognised this fact:

> But that's the problem, the nation means something different to everyone I think, to some people it's based on language, to some people it's based on people, family and the local community, to some people, it's something political, or something literary, to some, it's based on football and rugby, and that's the reason I think, why the success of the Welsh football and rugby teams is so important to people, it's one thing that unites the people, and to make people feel like one nation for a little while, but it means many different things to everyone, I think. (C, G2, P4)

Another participant, when asked what a nation was for them, answered:

> [Laughs] it's a big question! Massive to be honest, yes history, industry, culture, identity, it's hard to say, there are many, there are many branches related to the nation, yes, I wouldn't like to try to create a sentence that says what a nation is, it's, [different] for everyone I think. (NW, P6)

This participant described nationality as "some ephemeral feeling, something that, I couldn't put my finger on …" (NW, P6).

The overall observation that can be made about the participants' answers to this difficult question is that they drew especially from cultural, ethnic, emotional and sentimental notions of the nation. The overwhelming invocation of these definitions in how they articulate the nation may derive from the sub-state national context in which the participants now live, whereby a Welsh nationality in particular cannot necessarily draw upon notions of citizenship with the nation-state as the referent. In the absence of citizenship-based articulations of the nation, the openness, variety and vagueness of many answers affirms the nation's role as a broad and unfixable surface of inscription. Despite the variety of answers given, and the different elements of the nation that were invoked, there were no "incorrect," implausible or irrelevant ways of articulating the nation. The nation is a hegemonic construct, and while there exists a relatively stable set of criteria for what a nation is – invoking such things as culture, history, people and territory – there is considerable variation in how the nation can be understood.

The emptiness and vagueness of the concept of the nation is significant. Despite the strong feeling felt towards "their" nation, very few participants could confidently explain what the nation was to them. This has significant implications for the nature of national subjectivity, that is, one's self-understanding in relation to one's nation and nationality. National subjectivity is constructed in relation to a relatively open concept – the nation – which can be given meaning, and made meaningful, in a variety of different ways. Subjects have considerable agency in how they understand and internalise the nation and their relationship to it. It is it's openness that enables the nation to become especially meaningful in people's lives, as it enables people to make sense of it in their own way. And as the nation can be understood so nebulously,

nationality, belonging and identity can also theoretically be understood through a diverse and open set of meanings.

The Discursive Construction of Wales

In the much the same way that the openness of the abstract notion of the nation enables multiple possible meanings for the nation, specific nations can be articulated and understood through numerous different meanings. The empirical research was concerned with the way that the participants discursively understood and constructed the Welsh nation, as well as other nations that the participants wished to talk about. The intention was to build a picture of the discourses, images, symbols, stereotypes and phenomena through which participants understand the Welsh nation, and to explore how participants understand Welshness and other national subjectivities, and their own national selves. In other words, what conceptions or understandings of the Welsh nation (and other nations) do participants place at the heart of their national subjectivities? Once again, what emerged was a relatively stable set of themes, yet a diversity and variety in how various nations are made sense of.

Articulations of Wales

Participants were asked to describe Wales, and to articulate what they thought made Wales what it is. They were also asked about Welsh characteristics and "ways of life." As well as these questions, the theme of Wales, its 'essence' and characteristics, were regularly revisited throughout interviews. In defining Wales, while highlighting similar characteristics to when defining the nation in abstract, many participants referred to relatively typical, often clichéd cultural elements. Wales was talked about as "having its own culture" (A, P10) and as having "cultural things that you don't have elsewhere like the Eisteddfod and the Urdd stuff" (A, P9), and culture in Wales was talked about as being "very much part of life … it has a distinctness which is lacking elsewhere" (A, P10). Culture was mostly referred to in most cases in the singular. The Eisteddfod

was mentioned by many participants, and St David's Day by a few. Literature, including the Mabinogion and other Welsh legends were mentioned by a small number. Rugby, and also football, were regularly spoken of by participants when they were articulating Wales and Welshness.

Other defining features of the Welsh nation were given as geography, mentioned by several participants in relation to the landscape, and the border. Several participants associated Wales with music. A participant responded to questions about what made them experience their nationality as follows:

> If I watch the rugby and I hear the singing something stirs within me which it doesn't when I hear English singing, so it's an emotional things as well. (A, P5)

> Singing certainly does it for me, you know, brings up a feelings of, within me, Welsh hymns, though I'm not religious at all, but there's a, there's something that brings up a feeling. (A, P5)

One focus group made multiple references about the association of Wales with music:

> I was thinking about the national anthem, that's got something do to with the music more than anything, I mean it's just such a rousing anthem you just can't help crying, if anything made you want to be Welsh it would be the national anthem, it's just tremendous. (A, P3)

> And the music actually [in relation to what defines Wales], the first time I went to a funeral in Wales, in England if you're in church and people start to sing they sort of [murmur] and in Wales the roof comes off [all laugh]. (A, G2, P5)

What these definitions above represent is an understanding of Wales that draws often from stereotypes and clichés. There exists a relatively stable set of images through which nations can be articulated, as nations can often invoke such things as "culture" and cultural practices, national days, and national literary epics in any definition of the nation's uniqueness. Some participants, however, went beyond stereotypical images,

insisting that the nation was more substantial. One participant, for example, rejected the association of Wales with superficial, "tourist" things:

> I hate, tourist things, you know stuff like daffodils and dragons and things, so anything like that … it's more than that, it's very much more than that, I think if you've got the language you prize the door open to see it, the hymns. (C, P1)

Similarly, another participant (C, G2, P4) insisted that nationality was more than the superficial features of the nation often used:

> I think that nationality, plays a role in that, but it is, you can be very cheap about nationality, and you can see it all in terms of flags and banners and union jacks and things, back to the referendum, whereas I think that a Welsh identity, and a British identity, is an awful lot richer than that, and it's to do with people, and literature, and landscape, you know and places, and if you think of it as a football team, with all due respect, I am also a Blues season ticket holder, but if you think it's only a football team, then frankly, there's something wrong with you. (C, G2, P4)

The existence of, or at least the possibility of multiple Welsh cultures was raised by several participants (A, P1; A, P6; A, P9; A, G1, P1; C, G3, P4; C, G3, P1), with many mentioning the north/south divide in Welsh culture:

> I don't have a single idea [of the Welsh nation], I know people both from north Wales and south Wales, and they can be different. (A, P9)

A north Wales participant stated that Wales had a "sort of community feeling, even though it isn't one big community" as "the mountains in the middle keep us apart" (NW, P3). One participant called into question the notion of homogeneity of "a" Welsh nation, noting the Eisteddfod as something that can overcome the divisions in the nation:

> We've taken for granted that there exists one nation, but where is Wales, what is Wales? I think the National Eisteddfod is integral to pull

> the nation together, and the literature that springs from it every year. (C, P1)

This participant went on to say, speaking about linguistic divide, but situating it geographically:

> Well it's still two nations, and it's so sad, you know, it's split, it's sad, that's why I think the Eisteddfod is so important … it's so important for bringing north and south together. (C, P1)

Another participant stated the following:

> We're talking about one nation, but the people in the south feel different probably than people in the north, and the other way around, so it depends on the environment, when Wales is playing rugby, everyone for Wales [sic], but sometimes there are problems in different regions. (C, G3, P4)

The reference above to rugby as a unifying force in Wales echoes much of the research conducted on the role of rugby in Welsh national identity (Harries, 2007: 158; Johnes, 2000; 2012). As Johnes writes, sport, and rugby union in particular has 'been a central tenet in the inventing, maintaining and projecting of the idea of a single Welsh identity in and outside its blurred borders. It has helped gloss over the different meanings that the people of Wales attach to their nationality …' (2000: 93-94).

The invocation above of the Eisteddfod as an institution to unite north and south was interesting as the Eisteddfod was also invoked as a symbol of the linguistic and cultural divisions in Wales:

> The tensions that exist in Wales sometimes affect, as I was saying about tensions between the Welsh-speaking Welsh (Cymry Cymraeg) and the non-Welsh-speaking Welsh (Cymry ddi-Gymraeg) of the south and north, and so forth, and tensions in the valleys, and the response in the valleys to the language, and I remember, when we moved back to

> Wales, the Eisteddfod was in [inaudible] at the time … we lived in a village outside Cowbridge, and a village, full of … [non-Welsh speakers], without any interest in the Eisteddfod, and I remember, I remember talking to the man next door, … and saying "are you coming to the Eisteddfod?" and he looked at me and said, "why would I do that?" therefore the tensions do, arise sometimes, but on the part of the language it is, for the most part, and not identity. (C, G2, P4)

The linguistic divide in Wales between Welsh-spears and non-Welsh-speakers was also raised as an issue, with the following participants recognising the potentially divisive role of the Welsh language for Welsh national identities. The same participant as above went on to say that

> the very same language that saves the nation tears the nation, and that's true also, the language that has saved the nation divides the nation, and I know, my family originally come from the Rhondda Valley, and, in the Rhondda Valley, the feeling against Welsh is very strong sometimes. (C, G2, P4)

Another participant in a different Cardiff group asked the following question to the rest of the group:

> To what extent do you think the Welsh language hinders Welsh identity? Because this is something that bothers me, again it's not an issue for the Scots Nats, they're not associated with it. (A, G2, P5)

These examples above demonstrate that some participants recognised the lack of homogeneity of the Welsh nation, and offered a more nuanced picture of contemporary Wales. The majority of the participants, however, did not flag the divisions and fractures in Welsh cultural, linguistic and social life when describing the nation, and articulated a singular Welsh nation, drawing largely from stereotyped images. Once again, there was a significant "openness" in how the nation could be articulated, and while some called into question a singular and homogenous nation of Welshness, they further reinforced the idea that Wales can be multiple and diverse, and have different meanings for different people.

The National Assembly for Wales

A surprising feature of the data was how rarely participants referred to or had anything to say about the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government. The majority of participants were asked about the effect of devolution on Wales and their own "identity," and participants who had lived in Wales since before devolution were asked if they has observed any changes in Welsh life. Very few had anything to say on this topic.

A number of authors have inquired into the relationship and the causal links between identities in Wales and the devolved government (Williams, 2018: 305). Some have claimed some kind of change in the nature of Welshness since devolution, with Davies arguing that the creation of the National Assembly for Wales has 'increased the prominence of 'national identity' … in our political life' (Davies, 2006: 107). Bradbury and Andrews demonstrate through an analysis of survey data that while identification with Welshness is still predominant in Wales, there has been continuity and consistency in the relative identification with Welsh and British identities (2009: 233). Yet they argue that since devolution the 'meaning of Welshness and citizenship in Wales has acquired an unparalleled degree of prominence within the political life of the country' (Bradbury & Andrews, 2009: 236). Indeed Osmond's view is that 'the coming of the Assembly has made it possible for the first time for Welsh people to think of themselves as genuine citizens of Wales', overcoming the divisions in Wales caused by the Welsh language (Osmond, 2012). While there were significant invocations of discourses of a civic Welshness, (which will be examined in later chapters), the Assembly itself was not necessarily recognised as having made a difference.

Britishness and the Limits of Discursive Openness

The way the British nation was articulated was particularly interesting, and demonstrated once against the openness of this construct. For one participant, Britishness could be used to represent an anti-Welsh position in Wales:

> Sometimes, people fiercely say, I'm British, and what they mean is, I want to speak in English, don't want Welsh, and I want a completely British identity, to define me sometimes as someone anti-Welsh. (C, G2, P4)

The way this participant articulates Britishness is as a competing nationality or national ideology to Welshness. For other participants that articulated a notion of Britain and Britishness, it was as something that is compatible with, or complimentary to sub-state national identities. Indeed Britain, Britishness, and a British national identity can sit alongside (or indeed ahead of or above) sub-state national identities. The way Britishness was often expressed by the participants was as a container identity; whereas claims to Welshness, Englishness, Irishness or other national identities were often rooted in a particular understanding of what constituted that nationality (more on this in the next chapter), Britishness appeared more all-encompassing. For example, for a few participants, their inability to fully inhabit or claim a sub-state national identity led to a British national identity almost by default:

> I'm English … I've lived in Wales for 18 years, I married a Welshman, I support Wales in the rugby, but, I say I'm British, my dad, he was Scottish, and mamgu is Irish, yeah, and my mum is English, so I feel mixed. (C, G2, P3)

In this quote above, Britishness is a container identity for all these other national connections. This was also seen in another participant who stated:

> I have more of a claim on being British than English because I'm part English, part Scottish and part Irish, so I'm more British. (A, P8)

For this participant below, their own and their sister's sense of incomplete Welshness and Englishness results in a British identity:

> I was born in Wales but brought up, lived mostly in England, she [the participant's sister] was born in England but brought up and has lived most of her life in Wales and I said to her what nationality do you think you are? And she said British, and I said what else would you say, would you say you're Welsh, she said um not really. I said are you English and she said no, she said I'm not Welsh because I wasn't born in Wales, so I said so you're English then and she said no I'm not English I'm definitely not English. So, but she couldn't tell me why … but she doesn't think of me as Welsh even though I was born in Wales, so yeah, but we both just always say we're British. (A, P6)

That Britishness and the British nation is conceptualised as an empty container has significant implications for how these participants understand their national subjectivity. Their own personal reasons for feeling either unable to claim other sub-state national identities, or reconcile multiple identities, and the very understanding of Britishness in this open, all-encompassing way, results in their self-understanding as British. Interestingly, for the participant below, their sense of British identity has been affected by devolution, as the attainment of devolved governments by three of the four British sub-state nations has shattered their perception of Britain as a united entity:

> I feel as though there is a divide, and everybody wants devolution, well everybody and Scotland, I feel, I used to be British, but now I'm more English, although living in Wales I, it's, you've got devolution, I used to feel British as I say, but now … they've all got their own little, governments haven't they, that's how it's made me feel, divided, were not united any more. (NW, P5)

There was a particularly fascinating exchange in one focus group which demonstrated a closing or narrowing of the way that a discursive construct such as Britain can be understood and reproduced. This had a significant effect upon the participants' sense of national self. What was demonstrated, in quite stark terms, was an occasion in which participants' particular discursive understanding of the British nation was called into question, disrupted and challenged by the Brexit referendum. It demonstrates an

occurrence whereby the meaning that the nation can have, in this case the British nation, is suddenly closed or narrowed by a defining moment. This exchange took place during the second Aberystwyth group interview, which was held a week after the referendum on EU membership. Brexit was therefore a topic that arose several times throughout this group interview, and invoked strong feelings from all participants. What was particularly evident was that, for much of the group, the referendum result had shattered or disturbed their perception of the United Kingdom. In other words, their discursive understanding of Britain and Wales was undone and challenged by the event. For some of the group, the referendum result had caused them to re-evaluate their relationship to their nation, and to change how they perceived their nation, as is shown in the exchange below:

> I was very happy to say that I felt very British last week but this week, not as happy to say that … . (A, G2, P4)
>
> … That's exactly the same, ditto, I would never have identified myself just as English, I would always put British, you know when asked for my identity, now I just feel awkward about saying anything … . (A, G2, P5)
>
> … I would always have said British, I think that's because my parents were the generation that fought for Britain, and they would never have … they would never have identified with individual nations at that level, but I think they had a clear idea of what Britain was, and what they were fighting against, and that's more blurred now, and you have to think, well I've found myself thinking, what are the values I associate with when I'm saying I'm British … . (A, G2, P6)
>
> … Which I think has really been thrown into confusion now, we're all sort of questioning that now. (A, G2, P4)

For many in the group, their understanding of Britain in particular as multicultural, tolerant and inclusive had been shattered and there was agreement that they felt their values were no longer shared by their nation:

> I mean, to be British in the past maybe might have meant being a multicultural state and embracing the fact that actually there are no native British people, there are no native English people, we are an island of immigrants, and actually now when you think about it, I'm sorry I'm actually really getting quite upset, to be British now feels like, to be really racist and heavily right wing, and now I feel deeply ashamed to be associated with. (A, G2, P3)

What these statements encapsulate is a disruption to the participants' particular discursive understanding of the British nation. While the openness of the national construct enables a wide variety of possible meanings through which to understand the British nation, these participants experienced the referendum result as a significant disruption to their own understanding of their nation. The nation can be discursively reproduced in a variety of different ways and articulated as embodying different values, ideologies and ideals. Thus the participants of the second Aberystwyth group spoke of multiculturalism, inclusiveness and openness in how they understood the British nation. Their national subjectivities as British were formed in relation to their understanding of the British nation through this discourse. The effect of the referendum result, then, was to (temporarily) close or narrow the way the British nation could be understood by these participants, and to demonstrate a gulf between their own discursive understanding of the nation, and a version or discourse of the British nation that was crystallised in the immediate aftermath of the referendum.

Thus far, the discursive reproduction of the nation by the participants has demonstrated both the relative openness of various national constructs, such that they can be articulated in a variety of ways, yet also the potential limits that can arise as to how the nation can be understood. There is a degree of consistency in how a nation can be articulated, and the discursive landscape around a national construct is shaped by hegemonic struggles that seek to momentarily close and fix the meaning of the nation. Yet the openness of the signifier means that there is significant agency in how it can be made sense of. National subjectivities are therefore shaped by this relationship between the discursive landscape and the relative freedom within it to

articulate multiple meanings for the nation. As was shown, however, there are also occasions in which some discursive meanings for the nation can be disrupted and narrowed, and which can call individuals' subjectivities into question. The next section will investigate how it is that participants populated the empty signifiers that are national constructs, and thus actively produce some of the meaning through which they are articulated and understood.

"Othering" and the Invocation of National Frames

As well as invoking certain discursive images and symbols when representing the nation, there are other operations through which individuals construct their nation. This section will examine how participants use national frames when describing attitudes, values, social characteristics and conducts, and therefore construct their understanding of various national contexts through articulating various phenomena through a national lens. In other words, this section is concerned with how participants construct everyday life through a "national" perspective. This section will also examine the role that "othering" plays in how various nations, especially Wales, is discursively articulated.

Many participants associated Wales with attitudes, values and social characteristics. Articulating the Welsh nation through attitudes and values demonstrates what Miller-Idriss and Fox describe as the invocation of 'national frames' through which 'diverse phenomena become national phenomena' (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 540). In other words, ordinary characteristics are articulated by the participants through the lens of the nation, and are understood as "national" characteristics. There are two observations that can be made about the invocation of national frames by participants to describe ordinary phenomena. Firstly, the values and attitudes mentioned by the participants are not exclusive to Wales, yet they are articulated through the lens of the Welsh nation. Participants often referred to universal characteristics that could be found in any other nation yet understood them as distinctly national. Secondly, the invocation of a national frame to describe a particular characteristic is often done

through invoking an "other" which is deemed to lack this characteristic. For example, many of the participants who spoke of Welsh values, attitudes or characteristics contrasted these against their experiences of England. Miller-Idriss and Fox describe this as an ordering of 'social difference', whereby difference is articulated through 'culturally available schema', in this instance national frames (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 540). This exemplifies the role of the other as a 'constitutive outside', the 'other' that is the outside upon which the inside is defined and constituted (Laclau, 1990: 17; Howarth, 2004: 266). In this instance, the universality of the values and attitudes mentioned means that the process of defining Wales and Welshness in this way is reliant upon a discursive exterior to partially constitute it (Howarth, 2004: 266). Through invoking the difference and exteriority of the other, the participants are able to discursively construct a notion of Welshness.

The interview data shows this dynamic at work. The extracts will demonstrate both the framing of universal or commonplace characteristics as specifically Welsh and the role that othering plays in constructing Welshness in this way. Several participants invoked values, characteristics and stereotypes and placed them in a specifically Welsh frame. A number of participants spoke of pride in the nation, or having a greater awareness of nationality, as a Welsh characteristic (A, P2; A, P5; A, P7; A, P11):

> I like the fact that generally here, people are proud to be Welsh, my son in law is London born and bred and can't understand it, can't understand why my daughter is proud of being Welsh. (A, P5)

> I do think that Welsh, being Welsh is more like a badge for Welsh people, I don't mean that as a superficial thing, I just mean that they would wear it more outwardly than English people a bit. (A, P11)

> In Wales, I think identity is very different to the English, because the people are, it's a small nation and I think, and, even people who don't speak Welsh at all, they still keep their Welshness, on a chain. (C, G1, P7)

Pride in nationality is by no means an exclusively Welsh characteristic, but in the accounts of these participants it was invoked as a characteristic of the Welsh nation.

Wales is also discursively reproduced in this form through contrasting it with perceptions of England. Importantly, almost all those who spoke of pride or similar characteristics had moved to Wales from elsewhere, and were therefore articulating their perceptions of the Welsh nation against their experiences of other national contexts. Thus one participant, originally from the south-east of England, described Wales as having "comfort" in its nationality (A, P8), while another participant stated that Welsh people were "very different from communities, in England, a lot closer, [a] lot more, cultural, I don't mean … quite high brow, but they have interest in the culture" (NW, G2). This following participant, for example, contrasted English and Welsh national pride through situating nationality alongside a national past:

> There is a problem with being proud of being English at the moment compared to being Welsh, it's much easier to be proud of being Welsh, it's much more positive a brand identity these days than English is, English now comes with a lot of postcolonial guilt and a navel-gazing about where we are in the world, as we're not as powerful as we once were, I suppose that's a British thing as well, I must admit, as an English person, and living in Wales, I'm much more aware of my nationality being associated with, what's the word, invasion and oppression, and there's a kind of residual guilt with all of that, not that I did any of it, but, nevertheless, it's part of your identity ... I think the English are a bit more, more, well from my perspective, I'm slightly more apologetic about my nationality and I don't see, that concern displayed by Welsh people at all, and I think that's a good thing, they seem to be able to be nationalistic in a much more positive way. (A, P11)

A small number of participants invoked a class divide between Wales and England. A participant in Aberystwyth, for example, associated Wales with income equality, stating that "being too rich is not important in Wales, being more equal" (A, P1). This participant argued that culture in Wales was not for the wealthy, like in England. Another participant, this time in Cardiff, stated the following:

> I think, there is, what's the word for consciousness, I think I think that there isn't, in class, not as strong here as in England, and, that, I'm sure that it's still strong in England. (C, G1, P3)

These statements invoke an image of Wales that had long been disseminated by the discourse of the *gwerin*; that of a people free from the class divisions that afflicted other nations. The starkest invocation of class differences between England and Wales was made by the following participant in Cardiff, who demonstrates how ordinary phenomena can be articulated through national frames:

> I was in Aberaeron last summer, and it was around 9 o'clock I was walking over to the Harbourmaster[1] and there were lots of sailing, people? (…*pobl, hwylio?*) Yachting? Sitting outside the Harbourmaster with champagne and things like that, and on the hill there was a tractor going over, and I thought why, difference between Wales and England the tractor is, the local people still working at nine o'clock in the night
> …
>
> The tractor represents Wales?…
>
> … yes, this [little farm] still working at 9 o'clock in the night, it was starting to turn to night, and the sailing people from England were drinking champagne, outside the Harbourmaster, and the Harbourmaster is very expensive. (Exchange between C, G1, P7 and C, G1, P2)

This participant chose to articulate the events they saw using strong class and national frames of reference. The tractor represents a hard-working Welsh farmer figure in contrast to the extravagance of the 'sailing people from England'. Regardless of whether the participant correctly or incorrectly recognised the situation that they observed that night, to articulate the situation in such terms reproduces Welshness and Englishness through certain conceptual tropes.

[1] The Harbourmaster is a well-known up-market restaurant and hotel.

It was overwhelmingly England that was deployed as the "other" against which participants articulated and defined the Welsh nation. One participant in Aberystwyth, originally from Germany, identified what they described as a tendency in Wales for comparisons to be made with England. They saw in Wales what they described as an "obsession with the English:"

> I find this obsession with the English infuriating, so the negative side, there's a lot of navel-gazing and obsessing about how we are viewed, how Wales as a nation is being seen from England, and I think Wales should orientate itself outside, there's a lack of confidence as kind of a minor nation next to a major one, but that goes down to the most personal level which I find baffling and infuriating. (A, P9)

This participant understood Wales to be a nation lacking in confidence, though at the same time (and probably because of this) a "very very proud nation" (A, P9). Indeed whenever England was invoked, it was often articulated negatively, and mostly by participants who were originally from England themselves. One such participant in the first Cardiff group stated: "Usually I say I come from Britain, and my son states that it's because mum you don't want to admit you're English [all laugh]" (C, G1, P3). The relationship between Wales and England was from time to time articulated as problematic, and England was occasionally explicitly represented as a past-transgressor, usually in relation to the language:

> It's important to understand the history of the country and the nation, and, the English attempted to kill, the language, because, the politics, and it was criminal [laughs]. (C, P3)

Yet one participant expressed an interesting perceptive on this problematic relationship between Wales and England, and explained that the Welsh nation owed much to a reaction against not only England but Americanisation also. They state that events like the flooding of the Tryweryn valley did much to 'rescue' Wales:

> So this is where it comes back to Welshness, a lot of it is a reaction against the establishment of England, the industrial complex of America, against everything …

> … Is that a problem inherent for the nation and national identity? ...
>
> …No! No why god why? Because look what it's brought us, it's rescued Wales, yeah, Tryweryn, you think, it was a big turning point. (Exchange between C, P1 and Interviewer)

This participant recognised the "positive" and constitutive effect that an antagonistic "other" can have, and therefore had quite a novel understanding of the relationship between the Welsh and English nations.

There were some differences in how participants in the different sample locations articulated Wales. This was noticeable with the participants from Aberystwyth in particular, who regularly articulated Wales and Welshness through images and stereotypes associated with a more rural environment. For some Aberystwyth participants (A, P2; A, P6; A, P7; A, P8; A, P11), the contrast between their articulations of Wales and England can be understood or read as a distinction between rural and urban environments. They interpreted characteristics often associated with rural life as Welsh, and as well as seeing rural characteristics through a national frame, the participants, in many instances, contrasted this with an understanding of England understood through tropes of urban life.

Therefore, for example, Wales was described as having a "laidbackness," and there being an "enjoying of life" (A, P6), a "relaxed" pace of life (A, P8), and as having "just a nice way of life which may be different in other places" (A, P6). These descriptions were spoken by participants that had previously lived in London and the south-east of England. The participant from the south-east of England added:

> I feel I'm getting to grips with the country and the culture and the attitude and obviously here they're so relaxed, we were told, why do you lock your shed? [Laughs] this is Wales, where we came from if you didn't nail it to the floor [laughs], whereas here people leave the car doors open because it's a hot day. (A, P8)

"Community," "caring about people," and "friendliness" was associated with Wales by a number of participants, particularly in Aberystwyth (A, P2; A, P5; A, P6; A, P11; C, G3,

P6). Two participants in the first Aberystwyth focus group associated Wales with community, though the third participant disagreed with them:

> I think that community is very strong in Wales, it's very strong, not like England.
>
> I've lived here since 2002 and when I think back to England, I think that there's no community, really. (A, G1, P1 and A, G1, P2)

The association with "community" was in every instance spoken of in comparison with experiences of living both in England and in cities. Two Aberystwyth participants directly contrasted the sense of "community" in Wales with the "individualism" (A, P2; A, P6) and "anonymity" (A, P2) of London and Portsmouth respectively:

> I can see the difference every time when I go back to England, just, just, community, family, and just, supporting each other as well. Not just being in a city and everybody is, in the city in London in Portsmouth, everyone can just be anonymous and think of their own lives but, in Wales, when I came here, straight away the neighbours wanted to know everything about us, asking questions and everybody knows everybody, but, it's nice. (A, P2)

These kinds of differences were not only invoked by Aberystwyth participants. For example, most of the participants of the third Cardiff group associated "friendliness" with Wales. One participant disagreed, stating that it had more to do with one's area, rejecting a national frame in how they ordered this perceived difference (C, G3, P6). One Cardiff participant from this group also contrasted what they described as more "nosey" and open Welsh characteristics with the more private and closed off culture they had experienced when they lived in England (C, G3, P4).

It was by no means all participants that spoke of characteristics through invoking national frames. More participants made no statements about national characteristics than those who did. One participant insightfully challenged the association of certain universal values with particular nation constructs when they stated that "politicians talk about British values … and I'm not sure what British values are [laughs] compared

to values in other countries" (C, G3, P2). The section above, however, demonstrates a discursive process or operation through which the nation is reproduced by individuals. Individuals reproduce certain discourses, such as the perception of Wales as more rural, community oriented, and friendly, through invoking national frames when talking about everyday phenomena. There occurs a process whereby participants articulate and understand the nation through a certain discourse, while reaffirming this discourse through how they make sense of certain phenomena as "nationally" delimited. And integral to this ordering of social difference is the constitutive outside – the "other" – against which a particular discourse or identity can be defined. Thus Wales is discursively reproduced through the participants' narration of Wales in a certain way, and through their narration of what it is not. This further demonstrates how national subjectivities, and national constructs, can be creatively constructed in a variety of ways. There is significant agency available to participants in how they can construct these concepts and populate discourses with meaning, as the openness of these concepts provides a broad surface of inscription upon which multiple and diverse meanings and interpretations can be projected.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to explore, using the notions of discourse outlined in Chapter Two, how the research participants came to understand and articulate their national context. Having approached the data from this particular understanding of discourse, what became clear from the data was the "emptiness" and "openness" of national constructs, and the concept of the nation itself. This supports assertions made by certain Discourse Theorists such as Torfing and Bowman, as well as this thesis' theoretical framework, as to the breadth of the nation as a surface of inscription (Torfing, 1999: 98-99; Bowman, 1994: 144). The unfixability of these concepts, and the range of discursive meanings that can be ascribed to them, provide subjects with a degree of agency and flexibility in how they can articulate and understand them. Thus participants struggled to define "the nation," and national constructs, especially Wales, were articulated in a variety of ways, often superficially,

and often through either invoking an "other" so as to define it, or through articulating mundane everyday characteristics as "national" characteristics. What the data demonstrated, then, was the emptiness of the concept and the flexibility available in articulating it. However, what was shown by the discussion around Brexit outlined above was an instance in which several participants' discursive understanding of their national context was challenged by political events. Their national subjectivities, constructed through a particular understanding of their national context, were subject to a denial and disruption by events which showed their national context in a new light.

This chapter also brought out from the data some of the discursive processes and operations through which participants populated and articulated these "empty" signifiers. It was demonstrated that participants articulated Wales through invoking national frames when talking about everyday and quite universal phenomena. Wales was then defined as more rural, community oriented, and friendly, through invoking national frames when talking about everyday phenomena. Moreover, integral to this ordering of social difference is the constitutive outside – the "other" – against which a particular discourse or identity can be defined. These articulations of Wales were therefore qualified by their contrasting with the participants' perceptions and articulation of England. These discursive operations are enabled by the openness of these national constructs, and their breadth as surfaces of inscription. They also demonstrate the creative capacity available to individuals in how they conceptualise, understand and articulate the nation.

In the next chapter, attention will turn to how the participants understand and conceptualise nationality, with a specific focus on how they negotiate with discursive norms and rules of nationality. This will address how understandings of nationality demonstrate discursive rules and norms, and thus how the participants' conceptualisation of nationality are shaped by, and draw upon normative schemata.

Chapter Five - The Discursive Norms and Rules of Nationality

Introduction

The previous chapter explored how the participants produce various discursive constructs, such as "the nation" in abstract, Wales, England and Great Britain. It was able to demonstrate, through applying a particular understanding of discourse to the data, how it is that these national constructs are constructed, given meaning, and therefore understood. This chapter will turn its attention to the normative and ethical dimensions of national subjectivity. It will analyse how the participants understand nationality, that is, how they conceptualise this concept, what discursive rules and norms they draw on in their understanding of it, and therefore how they evaluate their own nationality and that of others. The chapter will therefore address how understandings of nationality demonstrate discursive rules and norms, and thus how the participants' conceptualisation of nationality are shaped by normative schemata.

The specific focus of this chapter's investigation is how participants relate to certain norms or rules that derive from particular understandings of nationality. The subjectivity-discourse approach takes the view that through being produced as national subjects, and through interacting with discourse, individuals are subject to normative frameworks. In other words, by negotiation with discourse, and interpreting the social world through it, they also negotiate with the normative positions and standpoints that discourses confer. By normative, what is meant is that how they evaluate, interpret or assess the social world around them derives from a set of norms or implicit "rules" – crystallised norms – which the discourse, through its power to give the social world meaning, confers. These rules and norms are not neutral, and often presuppose ethical positions. Therefore, in articulating their understanding of nationality, and describing what it 'is', participants are making normative claims which reinforce certain discursive meanings, and which legitimize certain truths, and ethical and moral standards and positions.

The chapter will explore the participants' understanding of nationality, and how they relate to the notion of the *fixity* of nationality through analysing their opinions on the question of *whether or not it is possible to change nationality*. As will be demonstrated, what was found was a spectrum of opinions on this question, with many participants taking a *fluid* position on the question of the fixity of nationality, expressing the opinion that it is possible to change nationality. Participants on this end of the spectrum express an understanding of nationality which privilege identity markers that are less fixed, often invoking or drawing upon more civic notions of nationality, and so deploy a different set of norms or rules in how they assess nationality. Others expressed a more *fixed* opinion, in which their understanding of nationality conformed to norms and rules which derive from a more fixed notion of nationality. Some, however, expressed fluid views, but also negotiated with more fixed rules which derive from the notion of an unchangeable nationality. The chapter will argue, then, that the opinion on fluidity or fixity of nationality depends on the extent to which participants conform to or internalise different, antagonistic and competing discursive understanding of nationality which differently privilege identity markers, from birthplace and ancestry, to place of residence and sense of belonging. Therefore, it will also be demonstrated that participants can negotiate with these discursive norms of nationality, and exercise agency in how they conceptualise it. Thus while some participants adhere to certain discursive rules which derive from a more fixed notion of nationality, many reject or mostly reject this understanding of nationality, instead articulating nationality through a different discursive understanding which employs a different set of norms of rules, ones that privilege less fixed markers of identity. Both these positions, it will be argued, draw upon ethical imperatives and positions.

Nationality and Normativity

When individuals construct an understanding of nationality, they are negotiating with discourse. The implication, therefore, is that the way that individuals understand nationality confers a normative framework through which they interpret it. Or in

other words, claims to nationality are interpreted through some kind of discursive schemata. As McCrone and Bechhofer point out, 'claims to identities need to have some objective correlates to be accepted by the audience' (2015: 18). Building upon research carried out into the rules through which identity claims and identity markers are received and evaluated[1], this chapter will examine how participants understand nationality, and how they negotiate with various norms and discursive "rules" that derive from notions of nationality.

A particularly hegemonic notion of nationality is one which emphasises its relative fixity and unchangeability. Nationality can be understood in relation to a number of identity markers, such as birthplace, ancestry, place of upbringing, accent, place of residence and citizenship (Kiely et al. 2001). However some of these identity markers are more changeable than others. A historically hegemonic "ethnic" discourse of nationality marks such features as birthplace, place of upbringing and ancestry as important facets of a nationality, and so presupposes a particularly fixed view of nationality, as these markers are difficult to alter. In their work on identity markers in Scotland, Kiely et al found that even in Scotland, where civic notions of nationalism and belonging have been promoted since the 1970s, and where a significant proportion of people did place some importance on civic notions of belonging, nationality was still conceptualised through what could be described as ethnic and fixed identity markers (Kiely et al., 2005: 152). Nationality, understood in this way, can be seen as something that one just is, or is given, due to place of birth, place of upbringing or ancestry (Kiely et al., 2005: 153; Kiely et al., 2001: 42-43). This discourse, then, comes with certain norms as to how nationality is assessed, and imparts implicit "rules" as to how the individual measures, comprehends or asses their own nationality or the nationality of others. For example, nationality, through this

[1] Kiely et al. (2001) have studied the probabilistic rules through which identity claims and markers are interpreted and received, and the relative importance of 'blood, birth and belonging' in identity claims in Scotland (Kiely et al., 2005). McCrone and Bechhofer's 2015 text Understanding National Identity has further developed this rules and markers approach in a study of implicit rules in how identities are claimed, how they are received, and how identity is attributed. In relation to Wales, Bourhis et al. (1973: 447) have studied how Welsh people 'perceive members of their own national group who use various linguistic codes' such as accent and language spoken. While less to do with evaluating or categorising the nationality of others, it examines how the character of others is evaluated based on national accent and linguistic markers.

discourse, is determined by a set of rules which privilege birthplace, ancestry, blood and place of upbringing as the markers to be assessed. While other notions of nationality exist which privilege a more cosmopolitan approach, wherein nationality is seen as fluid and easily claimed, the hegemony of more fixed notions of nationality is hard to ignore. For example, McCrone and Bechhofer, quoting Jenkins, state this example: a group of people turning up at the Norwegian border, with no historical connections to the country, no passports and speaking no Norwegian cannot expect to mount a plausible claim to a Norwegian identity (Jenkins in McCrone and Bechhofer, 2015: 18).

There is a practical imperative as to why this fixed notion of nationality retains its hegemony. While one's national subjectivity, for the most part, avoids subjection and regulation to the same degree of intensive normalisation and governmentalisation that one's sexual and economic selves, it is often still within the interests of government, understood as a rationale, to privilege more fixed, unchangeable, and even permanent notion of nationality. Nationality is often characterised by an irrational sense of belonging (Caputi, 1996: 683), and the consequence of fate or an accident of birth, over which there is no control (Anderson, 1991: 143). Indeed if nationality were entirely moveable and flexible, then the nation as an imaginary entity would have little power to bind people to it through an emotional connection with it and the imagined community. The nation as a concept expanded when states required more than passivity from its citizens (Hobsbawm, 1994: 80) and the capacity to compel its denizens to certain ends through invoking national sentiments or interests has been a mainstay of the nation-state. Therefore, from the perspective of governmental rationale and its relationship to the government of a nationally bounded population, a sense of attachment to the nation is preferable to a more fluid understanding of nationality and national belonging. It is for this reason, this thesis argues, that the national self is a site of normative problematisation.

The Norms and Rules of Nationality

In order to investigate the normative dimensions of national subjectivity, it was necessary to examine nationality, as the claiming of a nationality, and its assessment, is interpreted through a set of rules and norms. One of the most fascinating elements of the national self is how fixed nationality appears to be, despite the fact that there is little stopping an individual from claiming any number of nationalities, aside from the inability for these claims to be recognised or taken seriously by others, due to these claims jarring with the norms and rules through which they evaluate nationality. The possibility of changing nationality was a topic of conversation in practically all interviews. The participants were asked if it is possible for someone to change nationality, and whether it was possible for someone to have multiple nationalities. This line of questioning was intended to investigate the extent to which participants consider nationality and national identity to be fixed or changeable. As well as exploring the ethical stances which different positions on this theme conferred, it sought to uncover the implicit discursive rules through which participants make sense of identity claims, as previous research has shown that people negotiate with certain markers when claiming, constructing and evaluating national identity. In addition to answers given in response to questions asked directly to the participants, the themes of changing nationality and multiple nationalities arose regularly during the interviews, as the participants' experiences with learning a language meant that this topic may have been more imminent for them.

There were two broadly discernible positions held by the participants on this theme which can be characterised as a spectrum. On the one hand, some participants held fluid views as to the possibility of changing nationality; they understood it as "up to the individual," and saw nationality as inherently malleable and changeable. On the other hand, some participants held more fixed views on the possibility of changing nationality. For these participants, the fixity of nationality was a clear norm or rule which could not necessarily be transgressed.

The following participants expressed fluid views on nationality. Often, these opinions were held or expressed on ethical grounds, in that they invoked an open, inclusive and

multicultural notion of nationality. One Cardiff group participant stated that all someone would have to do to become Welsh was "want to be Welsh, there is nothing else" (C, G2, P4). Similarly, a participant from the third north Wales group stated:

> According to Saint Leanne[2], anyone who wanted to call themselves Welsh, they can. (NW, G3, P1)

A north Wales participant, talking about some people they'd met who had moved to Wales, took the view that they could be more "Welsh" than those originally from Wales:

> Of the people I've met, they're the ones that feel most strongly about Wales as a nation and, you know, we must support the language … these people are not Welsh but they're more, yeah well, Welsh … they're more closely identified with that than lots of people who are, Welsh. (NW, P6)

A similar sentiment was expressed by another north Wales participant:

> I feel, that the people … that have come into Wales, and to learn Welsh, I think so much of them, and I think a lot of them are more Welsh that a lot of people who live in Wales. (NW, G2)

One north Wales participant, following an exchange in which another participant had stated that "if a person is an incomer, they're an incomer for life," replied:

> I think what's in your heart is the thing … some people that have been born elsewhere, if you're born in an aeroplane you're not a bird [all laugh], you know, where your heart is, I think, who you support in the football, that's the thing. (NW, G2)

Significantly, many of those that expressed fluid views on this topic still encountered and negotiated with more fixed implicit identity rules, and made reference to them. The extract below is from a participant that has learned Welsh to fluency and who now considers themselves Welsh, alongside English and British identities:

[2] The participant is referring to Leanne Wood here, the leader of Plaid Cymru.

> Usually when I go home to England people say well, you are English because you've been raised in England and I see myself as Welsh these days but, I would say, maybe it's just up to the person up to the individual isn't it, maybe that's the thing, how you see yourself. (A, P2)

What they encounter is their positioning by others as English because of others' implicit understanding of nationality. This was despite their identification as Welsh. The participant, however, also expressed some ambiguity over their feelings on the fluidity or fixity of national identity. While they stated that they had adopted a Welsh identity, and argued that national identity was up to the individual, they also stated that they still fill in forms as British because they had not been raised in Wales. This demonstrates at least a weak adherence to certain rules or norms, whereby their not being born and raised in Wales causes some reluctance to fully state their identity as Welsh. A similar sentiment was expressed by a participant from the second north Wales group, who adhered to an understanding of nationality in which parentage and birthplace played a role:

> I feel more Welsh, this is where I've decided to live … but I don't feel completely Welsh because my parents aren't Welsh, and I wasn't born here. (NW, G2)

A participant in north Wales who had moved to Wales from England, and who stated that they now felt Welsh having learned the language, was asked what it was that made them feel Welsh. In their answer, surprisingly, they spoke of a small number of distant relatives that had lived in Wales:

> I have a [very distant] family history, grandmother, great grandmother, to be honest, great grandmother, with the surname Davies … I don't claim to be a Welshman, but I think somewhere in the past there's a connection. (NW, P2)

This statement, in which they are negotiating with the traditional marker of ancestry, through which a national identity can be claimed, stood out as contradictory to their earlier and later claims that they now felt Welsh. This participant was even considering changing their name to its Welsh equivalent such was the extent of their

sense of attachment to their Welsh existence. The following participant also expressed a fluid view as to the possibility of changing national identity, expressing an open concept of nationality as an ethical imperative, but still made reference to birth place:

> Well, I think, the first thing is obviously if you're born in Wales you're Welsh, but that doesn't mean, I think, that if you live in Wales that you can't perhaps become Welsh, I think the doors there have to be open, and embrace people who want to become Welsh … I have friends who were born in England who lived here and have lived here for many many many years and they will say, most of them anyway, they're English but they're Welsh as well, not English living in Wales, it's I'm English, but I'm Welsh too … I don't think the door should be shut on people who say I am Welsh. (A, P10)

Despite the invocation of birthplace, this participant, throughout the interview, placed a moral imperative on openness, multiculturalism and inclusiveness. For them, an openness and fluidity of national identity was an ethical position and consideration that they were keen to stress. Some participants demonstrated a more conflicting opinion on the fluidity or fixity of nationality and the norms through which they discursively conceptualise it. One participant, originally from England but who had lived in north Wales for most of her life, believed it was possible to change nationality, but stated that "I'll never be, as I say, quite the same as the people who've been here all their lives" (NW, P3). One Aberystwyth participant referred to place of birth numerous times throughout the interview, and attached significance to it, particularly as her own claim to Welshness was derived through her being born in Wales. They were also open to the possibility that individuals are able to choose a nationality. When asked about what 'becoming' Welsh would involve, they replied:

> So I think you'd either have had to be born or lived here, to have been brought up here, and, yeah either born or brought up here I think. In terms of the community, I think, they'd probably think you need to have lived been brought up here, and lived here, all your life … yeah I don't know what the community would think of … yeah probably has

> got something to do with birthplace, but I think maybe, I don't know, something about embracing the culture as well. (A, P6)

They went on to express the following when asked about national "markers:"

> I think, partly where you've been born and partly, I think what they identify with, so it's not up to me to decide what nationality other people are, it's for them to decide what they identify as, and, I guess partly how much they embrace it. (A, P6)

This participants' position was therefore one in which birthplace as an identity marker was important, particularly for her own nationality, yet it did not determine one's nationality, as it's up to people "what they identify with" (A, P6).

Many participants spoke about having multiple identities, especially in the context of adopting a new one. A north Wales participant that now claimed a Welsh identity explained that "it was difficult … you're not half one thing or not half something else" (NW, P2). Another north Wales participant described being "confused" having partly adopted a new national identity, as they felt that they were a little bit of everything (NW, P1). One particular participant gave this insightful answer on the topic of changing nationality:

> I think it's possible to change nation, yeah, it's a process of osmosis I think, and you don't lose everything to change, you keep it, everything in the past, but you can grow. (C, P3)

An interesting indicator of shifting (if not changing) national identity was the supporting of national sports teams. As one north Wales participant who had changed their national affiliation in terms of rugby put it, "changing national team, it's symbolic … who people support in sport … it's a concrete way of saying, there we are" (NW, P1). Two Aberystwyth participants, a married couple who had moved to Wales from England, had come to support different national teams in rugby. They felt differing degrees of attachment to Wales; one had a strong English identity (A, P8), while the other (A, P7), through holding a strong British identity, felt more able to adopt, or

express an affinity with other British nations. This had led to them supporting different national teams:

> It gives us different teams to shout for [laughs] …
>
> … Yes, yes we had this thing in the World Cup, no, Six Nations, I said our lot played last night, he said no they played today, I said no they played last night, I was talking about Wales he was talking about England, there was a complete, it was bizarre. (Exchange between A, P7 and A, P8)

Changing sporting allegiance is an interesting phenomenon. Some participants held more fixed opinions regarding the changing, shifting or acquiring of nationality, with one Aberystwyth participant in particular expressing views through discussing allegiance to national rugby teams. In the extract below, the subject matter was discussed in a rather joking way, but it nonetheless demonstrates a fixed notion of nationality:

> I don't think I ever will be Welsh, as I said, I'm fiercely proud of being English, in, a mixed kind of way, I don't think I ever will be, and to be honest with you, when I hear English people who've been born and spent most of their lives in England, saying that they are Welsh or they support Wales, I am a little bit angry about that, a little bit, sort of, not angry but suspicious of it, I don't like to hear it because you're not Welsh you're English yeah? … I do have a couple of English friends who've lived here for most of their lives … and they still speak with very English accents they don't speak any Welsh but they support Wales when it comes to the rugby and I'm quite disgusted by it frankly [laughs], they're lovely people but I find that really really strange, I don't think you should switch nationality … well, if you do then, then maybe you don't have a strong enough sense of your identity to start with, I don't know I'm quite suspicious of that. (A, P11)

What is seen here, then, is a very fixed notion of nationality which evaluates the nationality of others based on where they are from, where they spent most of their

lives, and their accents. Interestingly, this participant also places a moral imperative on not "switching nationality" ("I don't' think you should switch nationality"). Therefore, the set of rules through which they interpret and understand nationality are based on a particularly fixed understanding of nationality, which impart a normative position on this topic.

Accent was mentioned by other participants. A participant in the third north Wales focus group who was originally from England stated, when asked if they felt Welsh, that they didn't think so because "when I speak people tell me, oh you come from, from London" (NW, G3, P3). They had their nationality assigned to them because of their accent. Interestingly, this participant also stated that they didn't feel like they belong in London or Sussex when they return to these places, but did feel like they belonged in Wales. It is telling that their hesitation at stating that they "feel Welsh" in this instance seems to stem from their being identified as a Londoner by their accent, and by others.

One participant spoke of accent as a marker of others' Welshness, stating that "when someone comes up to me in, Queens English and says I'm Welsh … it's a hard one to take, it's a hard one to take that" (NW, P4). In this scenario, despite the hypothetical claims of someone speaking in the Queen's English to be Welsh, their "incorrect" accent jars with this participant's understanding of nationality, and the rules through which they evaluate and assess other's nationality. Accent is a relatively fixed identity marker, and was for this participant a rather important marker of Welshness. In this scenario, then, they are invoking a relatively fixed position on the possibility of claiming another national identity.

One participant, who did feel like they had partly adopted a new nationality, spoke of having their nationality evaluated by others. The participant specifically spoke of encountering scepticism from others as to the possibility that they had changed nationality, recounting how their London friends were sceptical of their now identifying as Welsh:

> I feel like … I've half changed my nationality. My friends in London don't think it's possible … and we tease each other about that, yeah

> there's a kind of, you get, a bit of reaction from English people I think … I've noticed the reaction when you start to support a different national sports team, people don't like that at all. (NW, P1)

Some participants, then, either held more fixed opinions regarding the changing, shifting or acquiring of nationality, or encountered fixed conceptualisations of nationality in how others evaluated or labelled them. They drew upon or encountered more fixed, "ethic" notions of nationality. For example, one Cardiff participant only felt able to describe themselves as *half* Welsh because they had an English father. Their improving Welsh language ability, however, was for them overcoming this "inability" to consider themselves fully Welsh. Their identity was therefore tied to an understanding in which heritage played a significant role.

One Aberystwyth participant seemed to hold the opinion that they would not be able to be accepted as Welsh, partly based on the perception that place of birth mattered a great deal to Welsh people. They therefore view the perception of nationality by others to be quite fixed:

> I feel very much in Wales, at the most basic level, the understanding is that you have to have been born here and have lived in Wales for ever to be perceived as fully Welsh [laughs] and there are many gradations and debates around like Sam Warburton having been born to English parents and now being Welsh captain. (A, P9)

> Another thing I find common in Wales is if people are very protective of their nationality, and don't, while not being hostile or anything, but, that, that is not something they take too kindly to that somebody comes in from the outside and perceive themselves as Welsh. (A, P9)

That this participant conceptualised people claiming a Welsh identity as a kind of transgression points to the normative dimension that nationality can have. They perceive this action as problematic; it breaks or traverses certain norms by which people live their lives. This participant stated that they didn't have "any desire to become Welsh," and when asked what, in their opinion, they would have to do to become Welsh, they joked: "I think I would try being reborn Welsh [laughs]" (A, P9).

There appears therefore to be an implicit acceptance of national identity as more fixed in the opinions of this participant. A number of other participants felt as though their nationality had not changed:

> I think that learning Welsh has really endeared me to those of the Welsh nationality … even though I'll never feel Welsh, for whatever reason, it's like my mum, she lived in Britain for sixty years, but she was always Italian, but she became fully integrated and adopted Britain. (A, P3)

> I've lived in another country for fifty years, fifty three years, but [I'm] still Norwegian, strongly. (NW, G1, P7)

Once again, there is the implicit belief that nationality is related to something other than residence, and that due to perhaps birth or upbringing, someone is "always" something, in the case of the former participant above, English, or Italian in the case of this participant's mother. A north Wales participant, originally from England, stated a similar sentiment:

> Well, I don't' think you can change your identity, once you're born in somewhere, and lived there for, twenty years, and you were born there, you can't change it really can you … You can't change your national identity can you? How can you? If you're born in a certain place that's what you are isn't it? (NW, P5)

This exemplifies that adherence to the perception of national identity as something over which choice is limited. The notion of changing nationality seemed to make little sense to this participant. On this end of the spectrum, then, more fixed and broadly "ethnic" criteria are invoked in how the participants understand nationality. Their discursive conceptualisation of it confers certain norms which shape their evaluation of their own and others' national selves and claimed national identities.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to explore how the participants understand the concept of nationality so as to examine how the discursive understanding of such a concept confers certain norms and rules. The subjectivity-discourse approach takes the view that discourse is inherently normative, in the sense that discursive meaning is not neutral. It comes with schemata and frameworks which structure how the social world is interpreted, how phenomena are assessed, categorised and labelled. Therefore, it was assumed that the participants' discursive understanding of nationality would be accompanied by norms and rules which shape how they evaluate and measure nationality, and that these can denote or imply ethical positions.

One of the most interesting aspects of the national self is the relative fixity of people's notions of nationality. It was this notion of fixity, which derives from a particularly hegemonic notion of nationality which privileges such markers as birthplace, blood, ancestry, and place of upbringing, which shaped how this theme was approached in the research. Having been asked their opinions on the possibility of changing nationality, the views of the participants were set within a spectrum. Above it was demonstrated that many participants held fluid views on the possibility of changing nationality, in that they felt that changing nationality was up to the individual and could be a matter of choice. What can be concluded about his group of people expressing this view is that their conception of nationality derives from a particular discursive understanding in which the identity markers privileged are those that are inherently changeable, such as place of residence, one's sense or sentiment of belonging, and simply what one claims to be. This position embodies a more cosmopolitan sentiment, which is in itself an ethical position, in that it emphasises the freedom to choose, and the fluidity of boundaries and borders. Interestingly, however, a number of participants who expressed this view also to some extent invoked more fixed notions of nationality. This demonstrates that while certain discourses of nationality can be invoked, norms which derive from other hegemonic discourses are also negotiated with and invoked.

A number of participants expressed more fixed views on the possibility of changing nationality. These invoked a discursive understanding of nationality in which the rules and norms through which it is evaluated assess identity markers such as birthplace, where one grew up, ancestry, and accent. For some participants, then, adherence to these norms were quite strict, and they unproblematically internalised the rules which derive from a more fixed notion of nationality. What was rather surprising, however, was the number of people who held fluid views on the possibility of changing nationality. This was most likely a consequence of the fact that all participants were at some stage of learning Welsh, and a significant proportion of them had also moved to Wales from another national context. Therefore their personal experiences of having changed national context, and having altered their linguistic positionality through learning Welsh, is likely to have shaped their views on the possibility of changing nationality.

To conclude, what this chapter demonstrates is, firstly, that discursive meaning is inherently normative. In negotiating with and invoking a discourse or discursive position, normative schemata and frameworks are also negotiated with which structure how social phenomena are assessed, categorised and labelled. In other words, the social world is interpreted through sets of norms, which are discursive in nature. Later in the thesis, specifically in the next two chapters, the ethical dimension of discourse and subjectivity will be addressed further. Secondly, this chapter demonstrated, through the data gathered, that participants have been able to exercise agency in how they conceptualise nationality. While a more fixed notion of nationality appears to be more hegemonic in public discourse and understandings of nationality, the majority of the participants instead invoked a more fluid notion of nationality. The fact that a spectrum of opinions was observed, with some in the middle sometimes invoking both understandings of nationality (fixed and fluid), demonstrates a process of negotiation with multiple and antagonistic discursive positions.

Chapter Six – Subjectivity and the Welsh Language in Welshness

Introduction

The previous two chapters have respectively examined how the participants discursively produced, understood and articulated various national constructs, and how they conceptualised nationality in relation to discursive norms and rules. These chapters have built up a picture of how the individual constructs their national context and national self, and how they come to discursively conceptualise nationality. In order to delve deeper into how individuals become national subjects through their interaction, negotiation with, and internalisation of "national" discourses, this chapter will examine how the participants construct their national subjectivities in relation to a significant dispositif of the nation: the Welsh language.

As Welsh learners, everyone who participated in the research interviews have some kind of relationship with the Welsh language. The intention was to investigate the role that the language played in the participants' national subjectivities or national self-understanding. The concern was with how the participants discursively conceptualise Welshness, and the role that the Welsh language played in their understanding of Welshness, and especially their own sense of Welshness. Of interest also was how their acquisition of the Welsh language had affected their sense of Welshness. This was therefore one of the topics that was discussed in the research interviews. Questions were asked about both the role of the language in Wales and Welshness in abstract, the participants' own relationship to the language, and how it may have shaped, or not shaped, their national "identities." The goal was to study the role of the Welsh language in how the participants understood Wales and Welshness, and importantly in their *own* Welshness. It was intended that the analysis of this theme would enable insights into the participants' national subjectivities by examining how they produce their Welshness in relation to this dispositif, object or marker.

This chapter will present its findings as three observations. These observations are insights into national subjectivity that emerged through approaching the empirical data, and the deployment of the Welsh language in notions of Welshness, from a subjectivity-discourse approach. The first observation relates to the participants' articulation of the relationship between Wales and the Welsh language. This involved an analysis of how the participants discursively understood the role of the Welsh language in the Welsh nation. It will be demonstrated that for some, the perceptions of the language's role in the nation intersects with perceptions of geography and class. It will also be demonstrated, however, that while many articulated the importance of the language to Wales, many participants were very keen to stress that it was not a *necessary* aspect of Welshness, invoking something akin to a civic understanding of Welshness.

The second observation is that the language plays subtly different roles in how the participants constructed their national or other subjectivities. Firstly, there was a distinction in the role that the language played in participants' sense of Welshness depending on whether or not they were originally from Wales or from elsewhere. What will be examined is how, for those participants from Wales, the language was a way of strengthening or completing their national self-understanding. However for participants who had moved to Wales and had learned Welsh, and for those who claimed a Welsh identity, the language played a far more significant role in their national subjectivities, as it was a significant claim to a Welsh identity. For both of these groups, the Welsh language played an important and sometimes principal role in their sense of Welshness, invoking a Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking discourse. Finally, a number of participants also articulated identities which were based on their experiences of being a Welsh learner, and which made no reference to the nation. Thus social "identity" or subjectivity based on the relationship with the Welsh language was articulated which ignored its national implications.

The final observation relates to an unexpected outcome which emerged from the data. Not only could two subtly different understandings of Welshness be identified (the civic Welshness expressed in the first observation, and the discourse of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking expressed in the second observation), but many of the

same participants expressed both of these notions of Welshness at different times. Significantly, while many participants constructed their national self-understanding based on a notion of the former discourse – whereby their national subjectivity was built to a significant degree on the Welsh language – the ethical imperative to endorse and position oneself in relation to a more civic notion of Welshness meant that many of these same participants invoked the latter discourse when speaking about Wales and Welshness in abstract.

This final observation will demonstrate the capacity of the subjectivity-discourse approach to shed new light on some of the processes and aspects of the national self. By looking beyond simply the importance of the Welsh language to people's national "identity," and by positing that the participants' relationship to the language is shaped by various discourses of Welshness, it enables an analysis of *what* discursive notions of Welshness are being invoked by participants, and through what discourses they come to understand the role of the Welsh language in their own Welshness. It therefore situates even this relationship between the individual and the Welsh language as the consequence of negotiating with socially contingent hegemonic discourses and meanings. Moreover, it will be argued that the contradiction in how many of the same participants articulate Welshness and its relationship to the language demonstrates the contextual nature of the national subject, as different notions of nationality are expressed in different contexts. Finally, it will be argued that this demonstrates the ethical dimension of the national subject. This is because the role of the language in Wales and Welshness can be a contentious issue; notions of *linguistic Welshness* can be seen as exclusionary, implying or enforcing hierarchies of identity. It can be derided by those who seek to promote a more multi-faceted, inclusive and open notion of Welshness, and who argue the moral superiority of civic discourses. This position relates closely to the historic distinction between the ethnic and the civic which has significantly shaped how Welshness has been conceptualised in the past two centuries. Therefore, when expressing opinions on Welshness and the role of the language within it, the participants are not simply negotiating with different notions of Welshness but also with the ethical implications of these discourses.

The Welsh Language in Conceptions of Wales

This section will examine how the participants discursively construct the Welsh language and the role it plays in their conceptions of Wales. The Welsh language, unsurprisingly, was mentioned as a defining aspect of the Welsh nation by many participants. An Aberystwyth participant described it as offering uniqueness, stating that "they've got their own language therefore they are real, they're not just a little bit of England" (A, P8). One north Wales participant described Wales and the language as "like hand in glove" (NW, P2), while another stated that "without being able to speak and understand Welsh you miss a lot of things related to what it is to be a Welshman" (NW, P6). A north Wales participant invoked a well-known saying: "Cenedl heb iaith, cenedl heb galon (Nation without language, nation without heart)" (NW, G1, P10). In contrast, some participants stated that it did not necessarily *define* the nation in and of itself, with one Cardiff participant stating that it was "not defined by it, but more enriched by it" (C, P3). A number of participants raised the issue that it was spoken by only a minority of the nation, and they mentioned this alongside their statement on the importance of the language to the Welsh nation:

> Language is a part of Wales, but, it must be accepted that the minority in Wales speaks Welsh. (A, P1)

> Language is definitely part of it and it's a big marker and it's, I, yeah, it's difficult, I'm not sure it's the, most definitive thing about Wales, well not now anyway, not at the moment, maybe it was and maybe it could be again but for the moment and for a while it's not been the defining thing about Wales. (A, P11)

> Thing is, not many, it is only a few people who speak Welsh … but, on the other hand, I think that it's important too, I come from the valleys,

> and many people are supportive of Welsh, even if they don't speak it, and also, in the past, Welsh was important for our history. (C, G1, P6)

Many participants, then, were keen to qualify their statements about the relative importance of the Welsh language to the Welsh nation with the recognition that it was spoken by only a minority of the population. While the language was spoken of as having a symbolic significance for Wales, what participants had to negotiate was the problematic implication that the Welsh language provides the speaker with a higher or more legitimate claim to a Welsh identity. The implicit association between the Welsh language and Welshness can be perceived as exclusionary for the non-Welsh speaking majority in Wales. What was being invoked in these kind of statements was a more civic, inclusive or multicultural notion of the Welsh nation in which the Welsh language, while important, is articulated as but one aspect of Wales and Welshness. This issue will be addressed at length in the final section below.

While many participants closely associated the Welsh language and the Welsh nation, there was a geographic dimension to how some participants related the Welsh language to Wales. For example, one Aberystwyth participant (A, P11) made more than one reference to the Englishness, culturally and linguistically, of Pembrokeshire. This placed boundaries on the Wales that could be conceptualised through the Welsh language. A number of participants in Cardiff articulated a more nuanced place for the Welsh language within Wales. Several of the participants in Cardiff situated the language within more regional contexts. As one participant stated, the importance of the language "depended on where you are in Wales" (C, P3). Their perceptions of the role of the Welsh language in Wales was shaped by their context; Cardiff and the surrounding areas have not necessarily been regarded as Welsh-speaking areas in recent times. Despite Cardiff itself being home to a large Welsh-speaking population, the proportion of Welsh speakers as a percentage of the population is relatively low[3]. Indeed, for some Cardiff participants, the Welsh language was strongly associated with the north and west of the nation. A participant from the north Wales sample, but

[3] The percentage of Welsh speakers in Cardiff was stated as 11.1 percent in the 2011 census, the 15th highest local authority by proportion of Welsh speakers, but the fourth highest number of overall Welsh speakers. By 2018, Cardiff had risen to having the third highest overall number of Welsh speakers (StatsWales, 2018a)

originally from the Rhondda Valley, stated that the Welsh language had partly been the draw for them to move to the north ("west or north was where the draw was" (NW, P4)). One participant in particular, who was from Cardiff but had lived in the north, stated: "My soul is in the north and my life is in the south" (C, G2, P4). This participant spoke frequently about his affinity with the north as there, "you can just use the language." The high proportion of Welsh speakers in the north, and particularly in the town of Caernarfon, caused this participant to feel a real affinity to the area:

> That's why Caernarfon, I find it such an interesting place, because people actually don't spend any time there defending the language, they just speak it. (C, G2, P4)

The role that the Welsh language played in some participants' discursive understanding of Wales, therefore, had a geographic or spatial dimension. Some participants reflected on how little connection the language had to their area in recent history:

> And of course, you know, Barry has never been Welsh, well it's a new town, but all on the coast to, up to even Bridgend in 1702 you can see they were complaining about the deterioration in the quality of the Welsh. (C, P1)

The notion of Cardiff as a Welsh-language space was complex. Cardiff itself was seen by some Cardiff participants as a place undergoing a transformation in relation to the Welsh language:

> Cardiff has changed, that's why, I remember, Cardiff in the 60s, I remember the, the whole attitude towards Welsh was one of, oh what's this, the people thought Welsh was something that belonged to the old days, it was associated with poor people, and the way forward, the modern way was to … get rid of Welsh completely. And I knew Welsh people, and, they took to speaking with posh English accents … Now that's changed, the attitude even, I think, … but there is some pride in Cardiff now at being Wales' capital city, and there is some

> feeling of Welshness that's stronger, and the language is an important part of that, but not the whole story. (C, G2, P4)

One participant felt that Cardiff was more of a "learning city" than other places in Wales, where there was less pressure to be fluent, and where learners could feel "safer" to practice the language:

> Now I work in Cardiff University, and using my language, in Cardiff, I just, I have more confidence now, which is a funny one, but I feel maybe safer in Cardiff using it than outside, if you are looking at it in terms of communities and pockets, I think I feel safer because I feel Cardiff is more of a learning City, whereas I feel the pressure to be more confident and fluent outside. (C, G2, P3)

The Welsh language in Cardiff was associated with certain areas of the city, such as Pontcanna, which is, according to one participant, where the "media people" live. For a number of Cardiff participants in particular, Welsh speakers were seen as middle class, with professional jobs. Speaking about when they hear Welsh in the city, one participant stated:

> I catch the train and hear it … but they come on the train, and they go off the train in [inaudible], and usually they are professionals, usually they work in the government, or in the museum…
>
> … In the BBC. (Exchange between C, G1, P6 and C, G1, P3)

Another participant reinforced this impression that many of the Welsh speakers in the area fit a certain professional and class mould. They spoke with frustration about the lack of financial support given to Welsh language events and institutions by this professional class, who, in the eyes of this participant, earn good money:

> I'm a member of the Old Library, Opera Cymru, but I've heard that there are only fifty members, and if this is true, it's quite a scandal, because there are 10,000 people in Cardiff that speak Welsh and most of them are professional people, and £5 a month is not a lot of money for someone who's employed in the BBC or, something. (C, G1, P7)

This association of Welsh-speaking Cardiff with middle-class, professional jobs was raised by one participant as a potential source of antagonism for non-Welsh speakers:

> In a pub in the Rhondda it would be easy to find someone who says something like "Those bloody Welshies over there, they get all the good jobs in S4C, you know, they've all got feathered lifestyles, all on the basis that they speak a bloody language, yeah, you know, they've got nothing to do with us, see, we're real Welsh, got nothing to do with the language. (C, G2, P4)

This sense that a Welsh-speaking professional class is benefiting disproportionately due to subsidy certainly exists in Wales (Day, 2002: 225). What is being flagged in the above statement is the potential resentment towards the "feathered lifestyles" of the Welsh speakers in Cardiff. It further speaks to the discourse that the Welsh language in Cardiff is closely associated with a certain professional class, and with certain geographic areas (Pontcanna). For some Cardiff participants, then, the Welsh language has a more limited, regional and context specific relationship to the Welsh nation, and for a number of participants the Welsh language, in their perceptions of their own area, intersects with class and professional roles. Overall, then, the participants' articulation of the relationship between Wales, Welshness and the Welsh language was complex, and demonstrated different discursive understandings of Welshness, but also class and geographic considerations.

The Welsh Language in Participants' National Subjectivities

Having explored how participants perceive the Welsh language in their conceptions of the Welsh nation, this section can turn to the role of the language in their understanding of Welshness, and especially their understanding of their *own* Welshness or national selves. Overall, the Welsh language played a significant, if complex role in the participants' sense of national selves. For most participants, the Welsh language validated their claim to a Welsh identity, and therefore played a significant role in their own national self-understanding as Welsh. It was clear from

the data, however, that there were at least two distinct contexts or structural positions from which participants were negotiating with the Welsh language. As mentioned in the Introduction, some of the participants were originally from Wales, while some had moved to Wales from England or elsewhere. They therefore approached learning the language from different structural positions, and deployed the language differently in their national subjectivities.

Only a very small number of participants rejected the link between learning the Welsh language and their sense of nationality, with one Cardiff participant stating: "… I know lots of people who don't speak Welsh, I don't feel more Welsh" (C, G1, P6). An Aberystwyth participant from Germany felt that language's role as a national signifier was exaggerated. They stated that learning the language was not necessarily a process that brings with it a change in national identity, saying: "I disengage the language from the nationality" (A, P9). They claimed that they did not hold any kind of Welsh identity. Similarly, a participant in the second Aberystwyth group emphasised that they felt language had no connection to nationality. They wondered if the association of language to nationality was political:

> I just wonder, coming back to the idea of associating language with nationality, whether language is a thing that is appropriated sometimes by fanatics as a way of being super nationalistic, whether in, reality, it doesn't really pertain, you know. (A, G2, P6)

For most participants, however, from Wales and elsewhere, the Welsh language was held as a marker around which they could understand themselves as Welsh, and confirm, reaffirm, or solidify their membership to a community, understood in national terms. Thus the majority of participants spoke of how learning the language had deepened or enhanced their feeling of Welshness:

> I didn't feel Welsh until I learned Welsh, since I've learned, I feel Welsh, and in the Eisteddfod in the audience of *dysgwr y blwyddyn* [learner of the year], and everyone else in the audience were saying that they feel Welsh since speaking Welsh. (C, G3, P2)

> I suppose to a certain extent, it's almost like it validates, I'm saying I'm Welsh but now I can speak some Welsh, read some Welsh, yeah it validates me being Welsh if you know what I mean. (A, P6)

> I feel more Welsh having learned Welsh. (C, G3, P4)

> I felt Welsh before I started to learn, but I feel more Welsh now. (C, P2)

For some participants, the inability to speak Welsh had been an issue for them previously. Their motivations for learning Welsh enables a glimpse into the role of the language in their understanding of Welsh nationhood, and their national subjectivity. For a small number of participants, learning the language appears to have been, in part, a response to a feeling that something was missing, or that their identity was incomplete. One north Wales participant described feeling their nationality was enhanced, as well as feeling "more content" (NW, P4). Another north Wales participant stated the following:

> [Someone] asked if I spoke the language, and when I said it was only a little bit that I spoke, I felt, not a hundred per cent Welsh. (NW, G1, P9)

For the participant quoted below, there appears to have been a gap between their understanding of what, for them, constitutes a Welsh identity, and their language ability:

> [referring to a time living in an English town] … there were a number of people saying things like, if you manage to find a [Welsh] course, I'll join it, therefore in the end, we set up a big group of people that, that were learning Welsh together, and the motivation for us all, no, not all, most of them were Welsh people in origin, yes, but non-Welsh-speaking in terms of language, and the reason for using Welsh was to strengthen our identity, and nothing else, the whole reason for learning Welsh, was to strengthen their sense of, to prove they could, they were fed up of the fact that whenever they said they were Welsh somebody said well speak some then, you know, umm, *bore da,* yeah, that is not enough, therefore that's why I wanted a bit more Welsh. (C, G2, P4)

For the following participant, the inability to speak the language was described as "slightly embarrassing," suggesting that the inability to speak Welsh was somewhat problematic for them:

> To what extent do you think Wales is defined by the language? …
>
> … Well, I'm, before I started to learn Welsh the answer was probably not very much, but that answer's different now I think. People sort of expect if you're Welsh, if you say you're Welsh, then they sort of expect you to speak Welsh, it's slightly embarrassing that you can't. (Exchange between interviewer and C, P2)

Another participant went further, and described the "little bit" of shame they felt at not being able to speak Welsh:

> I feel a little bit, ashamed, that I can't speak Welsh, and that's why I've learned Welsh. (C, G3, P5)

The theme of having lost the Welsh language from the family arose regularly among the Cardiff participants. Participants spoke of parents or grandparents who had not transferred the language to their children, with one participant, speaking of her husband who came from a Welsh-speaking family, stating that the family "hadn't spoken Welsh in the house, and [my husband] feels, like his father let him down, because he didn't speak Welsh with him" (C, G3, P4). For a number of participants, the loss of the Welsh language from the family in previous generations was still felt. These participants stated this loss as a motivation for learning the language, and expressed this process of learning as a reclaiming of something they felt was lost:

> I barely got my hands into it [the Welsh language], it was a part of my family, so, it feels like lost property, taking back lost property. (C, P1)
>
> Because *mamgu* was Welsh, and I was born in Birmingham, and my father was from England, but my mother was from Wales, and my mother didn't speak Welsh, … and I want to go back because, my *mamgu* died before I was born, and yeah, it feels right, to go back to the roots almost. (C, P3)

> My *mamgu* and my *tadcu* used to speak Welsh fluently, but they taught, they didn't teach my mother to speak Welsh, and we lost the language from our family, therefore, before I started to learn Welsh, I thought, that something was lacking, I feel different now I believe. (C, G1, P1)

What much of the above demonstrates is that for many participants, learning Welsh is a form of reconciliation between the participants' perception of Welshness – in which the language played a role – and their own ability to meet this perception. A "lack" is partially fulfilled. What many participants described is a process whereby learning the language addressed a missing "something," and their claim to Welshness, and their sense of national identity, has been changed by this. For those who feel more Welsh since learning the language, it appeared that their discursive understanding of Welshness had a significant place for the Welsh language, and that by attaining it, or moving to attain it, they are overcoming a blockage between their conception of Welsh nationality, and their own positionality in relation to it. In other words, they conceive of Welshness as having a strong linguistic element, and by acquiring the language, they are able to occupy a certain national subject position; they are able to fulfil a certain understanding of what it means to be Welsh. What this demonstrates is somewhat of an implicit invocation of a discursive meaning for Welshness which draws on a Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking discourse. Therefore, the national subjectivities of this particular group are constructed in relation to a certain understanding of Welshness in which the Welsh language plays a significant role.

Participants who have moved to Wales

A number of participants who had moved to Wales from another national context now claimed a Welsh identity, and the language played a significant role in their new identity. One Cardiff participant who'd grown up in England, but had a Welsh mother, was asked if she felt Welsh. She answered with the following:

> Almost [laughs] almost. I know I'm not Welsh only half of me, and more and more I feel Welsh, with learning. (C, P3)

When the conversation moved onto what someone would have to do to become Welsh, she stated that they could

> embrace … the culture, and they could learn the language, I'm, I'm ashamed now, that I hadn't done it earlier, because it's part of the identity. (C, P3)

The Welsh language seemed to be a vehicle to attain or solidify a Welsh identity for many who had moved to Wales. As one Cardiff participant put it, when talking about what someone would have to do to "become Welsh,"

> [they] would have to live here, perhaps learn to speak Welsh, it's very convincing if you learn Welsh, just be part of the community. (C, P2)

What the above participant captures in her statement is the fact that having a degree of Welsh language ability is a "convincing" claim to a Welsh identity. One Aberystwyth participant in particular, who had learned Welsh to a high degree of fluency, stated the importance of the language to her identity:

> For me, in order to change my national identity I had to learn Welsh, but, if you're from the country originally, there's no need. (A, P2)

Speaking the language gave them a strong claim to a Welsh identity as it was a tangible and clear way to demonstrate a belonging to the nation. It was spoken of as something which marked or signalled a "convincing" Welsh identity to others, but also as something which was integral to a self-understanding as Welsh.

The effect of the language as an instrument which enables a sense of belonging is best summed up by this participant, originally from London, and now living and working in and around Bangor:

> Well I feel, when, you're able to learn a language and start to feel a little bit more part of the country, it's a handy way to integrate with people, and if I were to go to Scotland, for example, I wouldn't have a way to integrate in the same way, but with Welsh, if you learn Welsh … you feel a little bit more part of the country, it's a clear way of trying to

> integrate, but if you go somewhere without a national language, there's no way. (NW, P1)

These statements demonstrate the subtle difference in the role that the Welsh language plays in the national subjectivities of those who had moved to Wales. Instead of completing or strengthening a sense of Welshness which nonetheless existed in some form, it enables it in a more comprehensive way, making up for the absence of other traditional identity markers such as birthplace or ancestry. It was necessary, then, to distinguish this group from those learners originally from Wales, as their different positionality and structural position meant that the language played a subtly different role in their national subjectivities.

Identification as a Learner/Dysgwr

A final point which emerged relating to the role of the Welsh language in the subjectivities of the participants is that a number of participants expressed a social identity rooted specifically in their experiences of being a Welsh learner. This demonstrates that their positionality as a Welsh learner means that the language can be deployed not only as a basis for *national* identification, but as the foundation of other social and in this case linguistic identities. It also demonstrates that while the language was closely related to the nation and nationality for the vast majority of the participants, it can be framed differently.

One participant spoke of how for them learning the language was a purely linguistic exercise. It was but one of several languages that they spoke, and at no point did this participant invoke nationality or matters of the nation in their reflection on their relationship with the language (C, G1, P5). The specific identification as a learner was more evident in the Cardiff participants than in participants from other locations, though this was possibly due to the high proportion of fluent Welsh learners in the Cardiff group, and the disproportionally group-based nature of these interviews, in which participants were able to share and respond to common experiences. Some participants had faced similar experiences, such as feeling nervousness at speaking with Welsh-speakers, a feeling of intimidation from native Welsh-speakers, and

encountering derogatory comments about the accent of Welsh learners. The shared experiences marked out a specific Welsh-learner identity, and a common sense of being both a perpetual outsider to the Welsh-speaking community, while also having access to the community through learning Welsh. One participant spoke of encountering a statement which labelled them as a perpetual outsider:

> Well there's some, I heard once, I listened to him, and oh I was cross, it made me really cross, well "you have to be brought up with Welsh *ar yr aelwyd* (in the home), you know? (C, P1)

Another participant spoke of encountering "resistance" from first language Welsh speakers. What the participant is explaining in the extract below is a kind of awkwardness or a barrier to communication which stems from the Welsh speaker's inexperience with learners:

> I find that I have more resistance, from first language Welsh people, than people who've learned … the other people, the Welsh-speaking Welsh, they turn to English straight away … they're not sure, usually people don't speak a second language … and they're not sure if you can understand, [they] have to speak slowly, and I feel there's a bit of fear in them. (C, G1, P7)

Much of the tension around accessing the Welsh language community seemed to stem from nervousness or self-consciousness about language ability. As one participant put it, there was a fear that Welsh speakers would "just think I'm rubbish at it, or they might get frustrated at how slow I am" (C, G2, P3). Another participant complained of how the 'Cymry Cymraeg' turn to English 'straight away' (C, G1, P7). The act of turning to English by native Welsh-speakers can appear exclusionary, and can reinforce insecurities felt by Welsh learners. The issues embedded in interaction between Welsh learners and Welsh speakers have been explored by Trosset (1986), who states that although switching to English by Welsh speakers can be seen as an exclusionary act, it is rooted in a 'politeness ethic' and an accommodation norm in which fluent speakers do not wish to shut non-speakers or learners out of the conversation (Trosset, 1986: 170-171). One participant expressed a preference for

speaking Welsh with other learners, as a result of a trepidation or nervousness about communicating in Welsh with Welsh speakers:

> Sometimes I sidestep [speaking Welsh] because I get scared that they're going to start speaking and I'm not going to know what they're saying, but if they're other learners, I find them much easier to speak to than, because we tend to have learned the same sort of vocabulary in the same sort of way, so it's slightly less stressful [laughs] but you have to sort of, steel yourself. (C, P2)

There arose, then, from time to time an "us-and-them" way of describing Welsh learners and fluent or "native" Welsh speakers. Some participants articulated them as two distinct groups. One Cardiff participant described "sometimes feeling like an outsider", and a feeling that she was "encroaching" on the Welsh-speaking community (C, G2, P3). Another now fluent participant in the north Wales sample, originally from England, described feeling a barrier between themselves and first language Welsh people, stating that "they don't really accept us," and that "however much Welsh I learn, it wouldn't make a difference, there'll always be a barrier" (NW, P5).

Indeed one participant summed up nicely the problem that many Welsh learners face in "crossing the bridge" from being a learner, existing within those social circles, to joining the wider Welsh language community:

> There's a tendency also, with Welsh learners, to carry on socialising in groups of learners or pre-learners … instead of crossing the bridge, people speak of crossing the bridge, and this says something doesn't it, the whole image of having to cross the bridge to another country, to speak proper Welsh, you understand, and they say that they are different countries, to some extent, and I find it hard to cross the bridge. (C, G2, P4)

What these statements above demonstrate is that Welsh language fluency, for some of the participants, is by no means a necessary guarantee of a sense of belonging to the Welsh language community. Their self-understanding as Welsh speakers is more complex, as their particular experience as Welsh learners put them in an exterior and

interior position with this group, even if it is only in their own perception of their positionality. Therefore, some expressed a particular subjectivity as a Welsh learner, whereby their self-understanding as Welsh speakers conferred a distinct and differentiated position from their perception of first-language Welsh speakers. The language, therefore, was not necessarily the basis of a *national* subjectivity. It was framed differently, such that some participants reflected on a particular linguistic subjectivity – or a subjectivity deriving from an experience with learning the language – and ignored, in this instance, the "national" connotations or implications of the language. Therefore, the Welsh language can be made sense of differently depending on the context of the discussion; when discussing nationality, it can be framed and expressed in relation to Welshness and the Welsh nation, but it can also form the basis of different subjectivities.

Shifting Subjectivities: Inconsistencies and Degrees of Welshness

This section will set out the third observation which arose from the data in relation to the Welsh language. An interesting outcome of the data was the subtle difference in how Welshness and the Welsh language were articulated. There were some invocations of a Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking discourse, and some of a more civic discourse of Welshness. In the first section above, it was noted that many participants tempered their opinions on the importance of the Welsh language to Wales with a recognition of its limitations as a "national" dispositif. Conversely, in the section above, it was seen that many of the participants' self-understanding as Welsh drew upon a notion of Welshness in which it was implied that the language played a principal or highly significant role.

The invocation of "Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking" arose rather often. There is the potential for controversy in the invocation of this discourse. The implication is that Welsh-speaking is a higher claim to Welshness, and it derives from the association of Welsh-language culture and identity with an authentic Wales, creating a hierarchy of identities (Bohata, 2004: 111). There exists a discourse, then – a discourse of

Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking – in which Welsh language ability, especially first-language Welsh ability, is a claim to a higher form of Welsh identity. Indeed Roberts' research into Welsh national identities in the Valleys in the late 1990s identified a general feeling on the language question in which there is 'hostility towards rural Wales' due to 'the perception that the Valley community is not accepted as true Welsh and, therefore, lies outside the boundary of the 'Welsh community' and nation' (1999: 123). This has much to do with the linguistic divide between rural, more Welsh-speaking areas, and the more Anglophone industrial south of the nation. Roberts found that although the language was valued, and many expressed pride in it, it raised issues of ostracism, closure and exclusivity (1999: 122-123). The encountering of the Welsh language in such places as S4C is described by Roberts as a 'daily reminder of 'another' Wales' (1999: 123), a Wales that can feel like it is beyond reach.

Subjects negotiate with the language, make sense of it in different ways, and use it in how they construct their national subjectivities, yet their internalisation of the Welsh language does not occur in a vacuum. They negotiate with discursive notions of Welshness which constitute their discursive landscape. The discourse of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking, as it emerged from the data, was prevalent and powerful, and often referred to implicitly and explicitly. Many participants therefore had to engage with this discourse, even if outright rejecting it and challenging this problematic perception or implication. Indeed this discourse, the implication that there is a necessary link between Welsh language ability and Welsh national identities, was dealt with regularly by participants. A small number explicitly expressed this discourse. A north Wales participant, for example, stated the following:

> You meet a completely different sort of person who's born here, on Anglesey, and speaks Welsh, it's really odd because the ones who don't speak, Welsh don't seem to be as Welsh if you know what I mean, even though they were born in Wales, I'm sure they are, but to me, I just can't explain it. (NW, P5)

An Aberystwyth participant invoked this discourse in a joking manner, though they did not seem to adhere to this assumption. In the statement below, they refer to the

fact that Pembrokeshire, which is perceived as largely Anglophone, is seen as less Welsh that other regions:

> It's quite amusing 'cos one of my best friend is from Pembrokeshire, which, as you probably know is called little England beyond Wales, and, I know vastly more Welsh than he does and speak it to him and sound quite fluent, to him, so he often jokes that I'm more Welsh than he is now, which is a source of great amusement [laughs]. (P14)

> My wife is Welsh, albeit from Pembrokeshire, a lot of people say it doesn't count [laughs]. (A, P11)

This discourse is controversial, as the participants were very much aware. The controversy stems from the implication that the necessity of the Welsh language to a Welsh identity denies the Welshness of those who do not speak Welsh. The issue was negotiated in a complex way. For the most part, participants were keen to reject the implication that those who couldn't speak the Welsh language were somehow less Welsh. What was invoked instead was a more inclusive, multicultural and broad notion on Welshness, which is reflected in notions of civic Welshness discussed earlier in the thesis. Below are some of the statements from those that argue that Welshness is not dependent upon the Welsh language:

> For me, I don't think speaking Welsh makes you more Welsh. (C, G1, P1)

> I'm thrilled with the language and everything, but I wouldn't say, oh, you're not Welsh Welsh (*Cymro Cymraeg*) … because you don't speak Welsh because that's not fair I don't think. (A, P2)

> I've got a friend who's from, near Swansea, we met in London, she's very Welsh, she's got the strongest accent ever, but she couldn't speak any, until she moved back here … it's not all about the language because some bits of Wales don't speak the language. (A, P6)

> There are a lot of Welsh people who don't speak Welsh but to say that they are not Welsh, to deny their national identity is totally untrue, my grandfather's from Conwy and he speaks very very very limited Welsh

> but when I go and see him we always sing Welsh together, and he's 90 now, when he sings the national anthem [gestures as someone sitting upright] he you can just see, he just sits up and stands to attention, he's so proud of that. (A, G2, P3)

> There are plenty of loyal and ardent Welsh people who actually don't speak that much Welsh. (A, G2, P5)

One participant from the first north Wales group, who was originally from south Wales, spoke of the importance of avoiding the necessary link between Welshness and the language, stating that they themselves had had their Welshness challenged:

> We have to not make speaking Welsh the cornerstone, of Welshness, not the cornerstone, because lots of people, the majority in Wales don't' speak Welsh, like me, and when I moved to the north here, forty? More than forty years ago, I was very unhappy to listen to people saying to me about me, he's English, because I don't, speak Welsh. (NW, G1, P6)

It is the avoidance of this implication of Welsh language ability as a necessary marker of Welshness which caused a great deal of participants to temper or limit how they articulate the role of the Welsh language in how they discursively construct the Welsh nation. Thus while many stated the Welsh language's importance for the nation, and its symbolic significance, many also expressed caveats due to the language being spoken by a minority.

Yet interestingly, many of the same participants stated that their own sense of Welsh identity had been enhanced or strengthened by learning the Welsh language. The fourth and final observation examined in this chapter is that there emerged an interesting contradiction in how some participants navigated these two antagonistic discourses. Indeed this contradiction emerged frequently: often, the same individuals would claim that their own sense of Welshness was stronger, more enabled or fulfilled having learned Welsh – invoking something akin to a Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking-discourse – but would also often reject the implication that the Welsh language made one more Welsh – invoking a more inclusive and multi-faceted notion of Welshness in

which language is but one of its elements, and not a necessary one. While even civic discourses of Welshness assign the language an important role (albeit as one element among many), many of the participants implicitly invoked a notion of Welshness which to some extent drew on the implication of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking.

Despite the insistence by many of the participants that there wasn't a necessary link between language ability and nationality, their personal experiences with learning the language and their sense of nationality implied the contrary. For some of the participants, the language was, on a personal level, a vehicle to attain, validate or strengthen a Welsh identity. There was therefore a contradiction in how the participants situated the language alongside or within a Welsh nationality; while it often enhanced, strengthened or validated their own sense of nationality, participants were mostly keen to stress that the Welsh language was not necessary for any claim to a Welsh identity. For example, a participant from the first group in Cardiff stated both:

> For me, I don't think speaking Welsh makes you more Welsh. (C, G1, P1)

And also the following:

> Before I started learning Welsh, I thought, that something was lacking, there was an absence in my life, since starting to learn Welsh, I've enjoyed a great deal, I feel different now I believe. (C, G1, P1)

An Aberystwyth participant expressed rather complex thoughts on the issue. They argued that despite only recently starting to learn Welsh, they were Welsh ("I am Welsh … whether I speak the language or not I am Welsh, and I'd argue that with everybody" (A, P10)), while recognising that learning the language was "the first thing" someone should do to become Welsh, and that Welsh speakers had a "little bit more" more of an awareness of their Welsh identity:

> I think the ability to speak Welsh enhances the feeling of nationality, but I don't think it's essential, being a non-Welsh-speaker [laughs] I don't think it's essential but I do think being able to speak the language does enhance your nationality. (A, P13)

While not explicitly associating the language with a stronger claim to Welshness, this participant does seem to slip into this implicit assumption. What explains this contradiction is an unwillingness to pass judgement on the Welshness of others, and to not deny the claims of others to a Welsh identity due to their linguistic situation. The participants therefore generally distinguish between how they construct their own claims to a Welsh identity and how they evaluate the identities of others.

Another complex and contradictory position was given by a north Wales participant, who stated they would have found somebody calling their Welshness into question due to their lack of Welsh language ability unacceptable, yet also accepting that there is a "little bit" of a connection between the language and Welshness. Thus they stated both:

> I've been in it myself, where, you're almost, you're not proper, you're not proper Welsh, you know, I've never had that directly said to me, thank god, I accept I don't know where it would properly go, yeah [laughs]. (NW, P4)

And:

> I don't want to start thinking about the hierarchy of Welshness, but, you know, I think somewhere the Welsh speaking Welsh man is a little bit more Welsh than an Eng / a non-Welsh speaking Welsh man. (NW, P4)

In the above, the participant seems to both challenge the discourse of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking, and internalise and invoke it to some degree. This, and the other examples above, demonstrate the complexity in how different discursive positions on the Welsh language and Welshness are negotiated with. Additionally, what the data above demonstrates is that there is a degree of *agency* in how participants can form and reform their subjectivities. As the subjectivity-discourse framework suggests, subjectivities are unstable, fluctuating and shaped by context. Individuals can express contradictory or inconsistent positions because in different situations, indeed even in the same conversation, they are thinking in different contexts, invoking different discourses, and reproducing or reiterating discursive meaning. Thus participants can

reject or avoid the Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking discourse on ethical grounds, and can invoke a civic discourse of Welshness, yet can feel differently when talking about their own experiences. They can occupy and express different subjectivities in that they are embodying and negotiating with different subject positions which relate to different discursive meanings.

What is likely is that, due to the controversial nature of the discourse of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking, participants were keen to express a more inclusive civic notion of the role of the Welsh language in Welshness as an ethical imperative. A notion of Welshness based on the language has long been accused of being exclusionary and "ethnic," and presented in stark contrast to notions of a more multicultural and civic nationhood. The long history of the relationship between the notions of ethnic and civic nationality in Wales was explored in Chapter Three. Different notions of Welshness are not therefore neutral; the hegemonic discourses of multiculturalism and civic nationalism create an ethical position in that it is positively contrasted against ethnic and linguistic bases for nationness, which are articulated as negative, exclusionary and therefore immoral. The prevalence of civic discourses of Welshness, and indeed even the framing of the Welsh language as an element of a civic Welshness today, is therefore shaped by this long history of the hegemony of civic nationalism. By expressing this discourse, participants were negotiating with an ethical framework in which notions of civic nationhood are privileged against what can be perceived as the intolerant and exclusionary linguistic and ethnic. Their statements on the role of the Welsh language in Welshness were therefore not neutral statements, as they had to navigate ethical schemata which problematised certain notions, namely, a necessary link between the Welsh language and Welshness.

Conclusion

To sum up, from the analysis of the interview data, three observations have been put forward. Firstly, in articulating the place of the Welsh language in Wales, while

participants assigned the language importance, they were keen to avoid the implication that it was *the* necessary defining aspect of Wales. Furthermore, it was in response to this topic that regional differences were most clearly evident. For some participants in Cardiff, the Welsh language was associated with not only geographical regions such as the north and west of the country, but also with particular class and professional roles within Cardiff.

Secondly, the Welsh language played subtly different roles in participants' self-understanding as Welsh depending on whether or not they were originally from Wales or from elsewhere. For those from Wales, the language was a way of strengthening or fulfilling their national identity. Many of these participants appeared to hold a particular understanding of Welshness which placed importance upon the Welsh language, and so acquiring the language enabled them to fulfil a national subject position, overcoming a perceived lack. However, for participants who had moved to Wales and had learned Welsh, the language played a far more primary role in their self-conception as Welsh. The language provided a means to assimilate and claim an identity, especially as they lack some of the other identity markers discussed in the previous chapter. This different role for the language therefore demonstrates that while participants are negotiating with the same discursive construct, the Welsh language, the way they interact with it is mediated by their different structural positions, in this case as from Wales originally or not. Furthermore, what was observed was that a number of participants also articulated identities which were ignored the "national" dimension of the Welsh language, as expressed a subject position based on the experiences of being a Welsh learner. Therefore, the way that an object and construct like a national language fits into a person's selfhood is far from straightforward, and it plays different roles, forming the basis of different subjectivities.

The final observation was that there was articulated at least two subtly different notions of Welshness and the Welsh language. On the one hand was something akin to civic Welshness, a more inclusive and multicultural notion of Welshness, within which the Welsh language was articulated as but one element of Welshness. On the other hand, a notion of Welshness was frequently invoked which placed a high

importance on the Welsh language. These two discursive positions were encountered throughout the first two sections of the chapter. However, a significant number of the same participants drew on these different notions of Welshness and the Welsh language at different times. Although many participants' national self-understanding drew upon a notion of Welshness in which the Welsh language played a significant role, the same participants often invoked more civic notions of Welshness when speaking in abstract. It was argued that this demonstrates the contextual nature of the national subject, in that individuals can position themselves differently in different contexts. This observation is consistent with the notion of discourse put forth by the subjectivity-discourse thesis, in that the un-fixability of discourse and of meaning results in a degree of agency and flexibility in how individuals can invoke different meanings in different contexts. This also demonstrates that the participants are navigating ethical schemata and implications in how they articulate the Welsh language and its role in Welshness. The participants were all well aware of the controversial implication that Welsh language ability is a higher claim to Welshness, a potentially exclusionary position. Many were careful to avoid this implication by emphasising that the Welsh language was not necessary in order to claim a Welsh identity. Therefore, despite many of them experiencing Welshness and the Welsh language in one way, the ethical imperative to express more inclusive and open notions of Welshness resulted in their expressing more civic notions of Welshness.

In conclusion, then, this chapter contributes to the argument that the subjectivity-discourse approach provides insight into the study of the national self. Instead of simply looking at how important the language is to the participants and their sense of national identity, this chapter has looked specifically at what their relationship to and conceptualisation of the Welsh language says about how they understand Welshness, and through what discourses they are interpreting it. Furthermore, by drawing out the contradiction in how many of the same participants articulated Welshness and its relationship to the language, this chapter has been able to explore the fluidity in how people position themselves and invoke discourses, and how ethical schemata can lead people to articulate different subject positions in different contexts. It shows, then, that a discursive construct such as the Welsh language is not neutral, and that when it

is discussed in relation to the Welsh nation or Welshness, it is interpreted through ethical structures.

In the next chapter, this ethical dimension of the national self will be examined further. What will be explored is how occupying different subject positions, and therefore negotiating with various discursive structures, also involves navigating, internalising and employing ethical schemata. Through being constituted as a subject, power is exercised upon the subject not only through its constitution in relation to certain knowledges and truth, but also through its entry into normative and ethical frameworks. Discourses have ethical implications, and so national subjects are also ethical subjects.

Chapter Seven – National Subjects as Ethical Subjects

Introduction

The previous chapter touched on the ethical dimension of the national subject, in that it demonstrated how participants sometimes, and in particular contexts, invoked a civic discourse of Welshness when talking about the role of the Welsh language in Wales; an action shaped by the moral hegemony of this discourse in Wales today. This chapter will focus on the ethical dimension of the subject and will explore the extent to which the notions of the nation and nationalism figure in the participants' ethical subjectivity. In other words, it will investigate the relationship between the nation and the ethical existence of the participants.

The subjectivity-discourse approach takes the view that subjectivities are inherently ethical, and that subject positions are not simply neutral labels that are occupied and identified with. Foucault's work on governmentality, ethics and the subject create a picture of the subject as an inherently ethical being, existing within a social world where power is exercised through shaping values, ethics and subjectivity (Foucault, 2007: 109). Conduct and ethics are the target of a whole host of regulatory and normative powers that are exercised through the production of regimes of truth, and the delimiting of normalisations and problematisations. Through the individual's production as a subject, and through their interaction with discourse, the individual enters into an inherently normative and ethical framework, shaped by the exercise of power through the delimiting of truth, and the distribution of norms. Therefore, negotiating with discourse and subject positions also involves a negotiation with ethical worldviews and positions. By navigating discourse, individuals aren't simply constructing the meaning through which they interpret the social world, but also the ethical and normative stances through which they evaluate social phenomena. The subjectivity-discourse framework stipulates that conducts, behaviours and choices can be shaped by the discursive norms and ethical codes which subjects negotiate with in their self-formation.

This thesis is partly concerned with how the nation and nationalism figure in an individual ethical existence, and how, and to what extent, do they shape the participants' values and ethics. This chapter, specifically, tackles the third research sub-question: to what extent can the subjectivity-discourse approach uncover the ethical and normative dimensions and implications of the national self? Drawing out the ethical dimensions of the national subject is integral to putting forth a claim to have comprehensively examined the nature of the national self. Exploring this dimension investigates how the subject's interaction with national discourses, and their constitution as a national subject, shapes their moral positioning, their social existence, their conduct and interaction with the world around them.

The analysis of the collected interview data will study how participants invoke and position themselves in relation to values and beliefs. Positioning in the sense also takes inspiration from Davies and Harré's 'subject position' approach (1990). This approach focuses on how – through conversing, using discursive signs, concepts, metaphors, language and images – one positions oneself, or locates oneself and others as coherent participants in a story-line or narrative. This means that the subject must have knowledge of social structures, is aware of the obligations and expectations that comes with assuming a subject position, and therefore generates a subjectivity (Davies & Harré, 1990: 43). With each subject position comes moral systems, expectations and codes of conduct, and individuals engage with past experiences with such subject positions (1990: 52; 59). This provides insight into how it is that when people give an account of themselves, their lives, actions, thoughts and beliefs, they create for themselves and others identifiable subject positions and narratives which draw on a discursive understanding of the roles allocated within such positions (1990: 52). Therefore, participants express narratives and opinions that derive from various values, opinions, beliefs, social expectations and moral and ethical positions that derive from their negotiation with the discursive world around them, and therefore their subjectivities. That is not to say, however, that these narratives are necessarily consistent or coherent; subjectivities can be contradictory, as subject positions can be differently invoked and understood at different times and contexts.

This chapter will proceed as follows. Its first section will provide a more general analysis of the values, opinions, social expectations and ethical positions that participants expressed in the course of the interviews. They were asked a number of questions which sought to explore the values that the participants privileged. There were many further instances in which values were spontaneously expressed. The participants were asked about what constituted good or bad members of the nation, how the nation should be related to, the attitudes that people should express towards the nation and the Welsh language, the relative importance of the nation to them alongside other social identities and priorities, and the extent to which they felt pride towards their nation, and the ethicacy of national pride. In answering these lines of questioning, and through talking about these issues, participants expressed ethical positions, values, and social expectations. In providing these answers, participants located themselves within certain ethical positions, and in doing so enabled insight into how they understand, narrate and express their own personal morality, values, and the social expectations they hold, through which they judge and evaluate how other conduct themselves.

The chapter then turns to examining participants' reflections on how people should relate to the Welsh language. Through exploring the ethical positions that participants adopted in relation to the Welsh language, it was hoped that the following questions could be answered: to what extent do the participants' decisions to learn Welsh demonstrate an ethical position drawn from national considerations? And to what extent is a sense of national obligation or responsibility evident in how participants reflect on the question of how people *should* relate to the Welsh language? It will be argued that the nation figures little in how participants navigate these questions, as participants express the decision to learn Welsh as a courtesy to their local context, and opinions on how people should relate to the Welsh language privilege the individual's choice and personal circumstances over a sense of obligation to the national context to learn Welsh.

The Role of the Nation in the Ethical Subject: Values, Ethical Positions and Social Expectations

This section examines how, and the extent to which the nation figures in an individual's values and ethics. It looks at the values, opinions and social expectations that were expressed by the participants during the research interviews. It will derive its conclusions from a close analysis of the data, so as to discern the discursive positions evident behind the participants' values, and the extent to which national or nationalistic discourses figure in their ethical subjectivity. The analysis will demonstrate that broadly liberal values and ideals take precedence over national considerations, and that national obligations and expectations, when expressed, are articulated in line with a discourse which emphasises liberal and civic nationalism. Three broadly discernible discourses were identified: a cosmopolitan discourse which rejects the nation as significant; a chauvinistic and closed conceptualisation of nationalism which was widely rejected; and a civic nationalism which was frequently invoked.

What was particularly evident from the interviews conducted was that most participants were keen to position themselves in line with broadly liberal and cosmopolitan values, in that many expressed values in line with these principles. For many participants, these broadly liberal values were expressed as being more important than "national" values and obligations. Many participants were generally keen to emphasise that what they held to be most important were those things held in common by people everywhere, and universal values that transcend national differences. In this context, some of these individuals placed little importance on their own national identity. As one participant stated, "a person is a person" (C, G3, P4). There were several comments made on this theme:

> One thing I think stands out, wherever you go in the world, I think, people are basically the same, we all want the same thing, we want our families to be healthy and happy, you know, we want a reasonable standard of living and a job and a house and things like that, but one of

> the main difference between all these people is language, but somehow you just manage to get along. (A, P10)
>
> Since I went to university I don't see much difference between Wales, England and Scotland, to be honest, I've met a lot of people from abroad, and I've worked with a lot of people from abroad, and, I could see how similar the people in Britain were, but, on the other hand, across the world, I think that, it sounds a bit cheesy but people are quite similar, wherever you are in the world. (C, G1, P6)
>
> Treating people as human beings or human values and trying to, understand that everyone from every part of the word have the same feelings, same sense of good and bad, ok people are different, but I think it's being kind, treating people nicely, and value their perspective and their values. (A, G2, P1)
>
> It doesn't matter where you come from in the world … I think what ultimately shines through is how you are as a person, and I think that is the biggest factor that defines how well or badly you get on in a country, not which nationality you are, or where you're born, but what you're like as a person and the respect and tolerance you have for people that are different. (A, G2, P2)

One participant, when asked about their national identity, concluded their answer with "[I'm] a human being first and foremost" (A, P5). Another, when asked if they held more important values than nationality, replied with, "for sure", stating that "the love of others" was of greater importance. A north Wales participant, when asked how important their national identity was to them, stated: "I think personally Jo Cox said that we have more things in common than different" (NW, G1, P2). The invocation of Jo Cox was significant, as she had not long been murdered by a man connected to far-right British nationalism (BBC News, 2016a). One Aberystwyth participant stated:

> I know they're Welsh because they speak Welsh and they live here, but I don't actually actively think of anybody as being Welsh, they're just people. (A, P8)

For one north Wales participant in particular, other identities took precedence:

> I've never felt very close to … national identity, ever I think, since I was young, because other identities are more important to me, like sexual identity or class identity, than nation. (NW, G1, P3)

These statements denote a particular ethical position in relation to the nation and cosmopolitan ideals. Some participants, when asked what makes a good member of a nation, answered through expressing universalistic answers which privilege cosmopolitanism and tolerance. The first Cardiff group all agreed that "respect" was what made a person a good member of the nation. The following exchange occurred in the second Cardiff group, expressing broadly liberal values in answer to the question of what makes a good member of the nation:

> P1: Someone who welcomes people from everywhere …
>
> P4: … Inclusive …
>
> P1: … Inclusive again, the same word comes up again …
>
> P4: … Respect people …
>
> P1: … Yeah respect people, to be very proud to be here, and people have the same opportunities as you, I think …
>
> P4: … Respect people whatever their nationality, background, language …
>
> P1: … Yeah that's what's important to me, yeah, and the opposite is, yeah saying to people you can't come in, you can't be, yeah …
>
> P2: … But also, to support [encourage] people to appreciate important things, like nation, and the language. (Exchange between C, G2, P1; C, G2, P2 and C, G2 P4)

The final statement above (by C, G2, P2) was indicative of many statements made. Despite the expression of liberal values, participants did not reject national considerations, nor the importance to them of nationality, when positioning themselves in line with liberal or cosmopolitan values. The relative importance that each participant attached to national and liberal considerations was interesting, and demonstrates a complex negotiation with two priorities that *can* invoke contradictory and antagonistic values: universal and particular, open and closed. For example, a participant from the north Wales sample spoke of the importance of "being prepared to, welcome, other people," *and* the importance of "remembering what your own nation is, and keep … it alive … perhaps through trying to learn the language, or, sending … children to school to speak Welsh" (NW, P6). A participant from the second Cardiff group spoke repeatedly about the importance of tolerance, inclusiveness and respect, and expressed some trepidation at the idea of nationalism, yet expressed real disappointment and sadness that their daughter was sometimes dismissive of Wales:

> Well I hope that my children feel the same way as me, Welsh … my daughter lives in Bristol now, and every time she mentions Welsh people as, people over there, and I think, you have to think, you come from Cardiff, and her name, [redacted], has a Welsh name also, but sometimes, she speaks of Cardiff and Wales as something, hmm, with words not too, … I hope she remembers, that's where her roots were, I think, and I hope that she remembers she comes from Cardiff. (C, G2, P1)

An Aberystwyth participant demonstrated the complexity of this negotiation through expressing the following two statements:

> I would like to be remembered for more than just being English, I would want to be remembered by things I've achieved, personal qualities, that's more important I think. (A, P7)

> I think there are more important things to worry about in the world, and, whatever nationality you are … I wouldn't want it taken away, I

> wouldn't want it stolen from me, because I think I would feel I've lost something. (A, P7)

This participant above expressed a nuanced account of the relative importance of nationality and other "qualities," thus nationality can be important despite the privileging of other values and ideals.

For some participants, their pride in the nation, and their identification with it, combined both national pride and pride in certain liberal values embodied by their nation. For example, a participant from the first Cardiff group spoke of what made them proud of the Welsh nation, drawing upon images of past solidarity between Welsh miners and certain subjugated groups:

> The miners, they weren't, happy, they were very strong, supporting people across the world, people in difficult situations, people across the world, black people, perhaps, south Wales were very supportive of those people, and stood up, stood up against anyone I believe. (C, G1, P1)

Similarly, a participant from the second Cardiff group stated that Wales was a proud nation with a "great sense of identity," and that "we do it with inclusivity, pride and welcoming," and that they liked that side of it (C, G2, P3). Another participant from the second Cardiff group argued that nationalism, specifically Welsh nationalism, could be inclusive, outward looking (specifically, European) and respectful:

> Well burning houses is not acceptable, I accept that, but to go back to identity … I think that's why people like Dafydd Wigley and even Saunders Lewis said that the whole European dimension was [integral] to the idea of Welshness, if you think of yourself and want to emphasise your Welsh identity, then you have to accept the whole idea of families of nations, we're a people that coexist … it's important to have people that are inclusive, inclusive, yeah, and that is for me the foundation of the whole way that Plaid Cymru work, I know there are others, the house burning movement, yeah, *Meibion Glyndwr* are quite different to Dafydd Wigley and his crew, and you, if you are a nationalist, have to

> reject the whole idea of surviving over other people, yeah, nationalism is not about dominating other people, it's about respecting them. (C, G2, P4)

For these three participants above, the nation, nationality and nationalism can be expressed through liberal values, thereby reconciling any implication that the values of liberalism and nationalism are mutually exclusive. They therefore a kind of civic nationalism; a concept of nationalism couched in universal, liberal and inclusive values.

The complexity around negotiating with liberal and national subject positions, and the effect of this upon values and moral codes, is highlighted by answers to questions relating to good and bad members of the nation. What was very commonly expressed by participants was an expectation that people should be proud of their nation, that they should participate in the national life of the nation, and respect the nation's culture, language and traditions. Participants often spoke of the social expectation to celebrate, appreciate, show interest or feel pride in one's national culture. One Aberystwyth participant, when asked what constituted good members of the nation, answered with the following:

> Having an understanding of, your nation's history, culture, politics, and being able sort of, being able to convey those to other people. (A, P11)

The participant went on to speak of the importance of being a "good ambassador of your nation," and the importance of being "a positive model of your nation," and "behaving in a way that reflects positively on your nation" (A, P11). This theme of being a good ambassador for your nation arose on a number of occasions. A north Wales participant spoke of representing their nation when abroad:

> It sounds silly, you're representing Wales, cos if they don't see many Welsh people, if you're a fool, then Welsh people are a bunch of fools, and they might if they're not meeting many others, so where I have gone, you know, I've conducted myself quite well, as hopefully gave a good perception of, other Welsh people. (NW, P4)

An Aberystwyth participant stated that a good member of the nation took part in preserving Welsh traditions:

> If they're not embraced, there's a danger of those things not carrying on, so being a part of, supporting all of that sort of stuff. (A, P6)

Similarly, a north Wales participant stated that a good member of the nation was somebody who:

> upholds the traditions, but, somebody who represents the county in a positive way, somebody who joins in with the things that have made the country what it is, as long as it's positive … so it has to be positive doesn't it, so you take what people have done before you and if you can't improve on it, then you keep it what it is. (NW, P3)

This participant made an interesting statement about the kind of Welsh people they had encountered living in Manchester, who had nice middle class jobs, and who by turning up for the annual St. David's Day concert and "listening to such things and wiping their eyes, [felt] they were being *Cymry i'r carn* (Welsh through and through)" (NW, P3). This participant expressed resentment that these were the Cymry Cymraeg (Welsh-speaking Welsh) who they, as a learner, would never fit in with, who "would consider me English." Yet they stated that they were the one that had moved to Wales, who had turned a former holiday home into a Welsh-speaking family home, with a daughter who had an A-level in first language Welsh (NW, P3). This was a fascinating glimpse into how this participant evaluated good and bad conduct relating to Welshness, contrasting their more meaningful engagement with the nation against the superficial Welshness of the middle classes who had settled in England.

Speaking about bad members of the nation, a Cardiff participant offered the following:

> Someone who doesn't, respect … the traditions, and doesn't respect the language, the values, and the past and the present and the future. I'm not a nationalist, but, yeah, it is, yeah someone bad doesn't respect difference and people who love their identity. (C, P3)

The statement above was typical of very many of the participants' perceptions or understanding of nationalism ("I'm not a nationalist, but…"). Participants often expressed a trepidation about nationalism, as it was often understood by participants as xenophobic, extremist, closed and insular: "I'm a bit nervous about, what's the word, nationalist … I'm not happy with [it]" (C, G2, P1). What was commonly expressed, then, was an appreciation of the nation by participants, a pride in nationality, and the expectation of this from others, but also a clear line drawn between this and what they perceived to be *nationalism*, which was often understood in a negative light. Nationalism was often equated with intolerance, extremism and even fascism. This demonstrates an implicit invocation by many participants of the discourse of nationalism as parochial, negative and closed, in contrast to other, more open, liberal values. For example:

> I always put Welsh, if I fill in a form, but that doesn't mean I'm a nationalist in any way, I'm Welsh and then British and then European, a human being first and foremost. (A, P5)

What was particularly interesting was that nationalism was even perceived negatively by those who expressed "nationalistic" sentiments, demonstrating a gulf between a perception of nationalism as negative, and *their own* pride in the nation and their national identity, which was spoken of as something other than nationalism. One participant stated that they were not a nationalist, but

> I vote for Plaid Cymru, no problem at all there, but if you go too, too narrow, because, it's more like Hitler and things like that. (C, G3, P7)

This quite clearly situates their own perception of nationalism as something dangerous and extremist, and also situates their own "nationalism" as moderate and legitimate. This again demonstrates an invocation of a constitutive outside in the participants' production of discursive meaning, and in their own national subjectivities. Their own sense of national self is constructed, articulated, and thus temporarily "fixed" through invoking an antagonistic discursive conceptualisation of nationalism against which they define their own national self, and importantly, their ethical self and national values. They interpret their own national selves through a

discourse which problematises certain conducts, values and ethics, and which is constituted by that against which it is antagonistically poised.

A significant number of participants were explicitly anti-nationalistic, even sometimes when also expressing pride in their nation or identity. Some were weary of nationalism because of the potential for it to become dangerous and extreme. In response to the statement above which invoked Jo Cox's murder, one participant stated:

> That's why I feel uncomfortable with the idea of nationalism, because it's, more often than not it emphasises difference and not what's similar. (NW, G1, P3)

Several other similar statements were made about the negative potential of nationalism:

> The danger with national identities, is that they can be misused, in order to force people to conform to a pattern of behaviours, and that's a, the end of that road is fascism. (C, G2, P4)

> I have kind of … mixed feelings with national pride, I feel a bit that national pride is a dangerous thing, it's very natural I feel, and there are a lot of positive things with national pride, but it's a dangerous thing also, therefore, I feel a bit of responsibility to have a bit of introspection. (NW, P1)

Many participants felt that a bad member of the nation was somebody who was overly nationalistic:

> I would also say that, being overly nationalistic would make you a bad member of the nation … when the nation seems to sometimes become too important, to the point, where, I'm thinking of when it becomes violent, when people become violently attached to their nationality or they want to, spread their nationality through sort of violent or aggressive way, yeah, that then makes you a bad member of the nation,

> yeah, you have to be a positive kind of embodiment of your nation's ideals I suppose. (A, P11)

> [A bad member of the nation is] somebody who can only see very little besides his nation and, you know like somebody who would be voting for Brexit just because the country was great in the fifties or something like that, that kind of thing, who put their own nation above all others and not equal to others. (A, P9)

> I suppose somebody who is, I suppose you could take an example of the English Defence League is a bad example, because they're ultranationalist, they're xenophobes, they won't tolerate anybody who doesn't think the way they think, they would say they were ultra ultra British, but they're not encompassing the values they should have, the wrong values, and that's the bad side of nationalism. (A, P7)

What was commonly expressed, therefore, was an expectation that people should be proud of their nation, and that to celebrate or appreciate one's nationality was good, but there is a line which should not be crossed, a line beyond which, for many participants, lies nationalism understood as xenophobic, closed and insular. One participant expressed this as a distinction between patriotism and nationalism:

> There's a big difference between being patriotic and nationalistic, it is, you know, there's a dividing line between, being patriotic for your country, and being nationalistic, there's a difference. (C, G3, P4)

In his work on banal nationalism, Billig argues that there is no such distinction between nationalism and patriotism. The distinction works to make 'our nationalism' appear as a 'beneficial' and 'necessary' force, a patriotism which is contrasted against the dangerous, irrational, surplus and alien nationalism of the other (Billig, 2014: 55). The perception of difference between nationalism and patriotism differentiates between legitimate and illegitimate nationalism. The effect of distinguishing between one's own legitimate nationalism and other, dangerous nationalisms is that one's own pride in the nation and nationality, and one's moralistic judgements on how nationals should conduct themselves, can be produced or understood as positive, inclusive and

respectful. By reproducing nationalism as a xenophobic and negative construct, one is able to position themselves as both a national subject and a subject embodying positive liberal values and ideals. The subject's identity is produced through reproducing negative nationalism as a constitutive outside. Thus for very many participants it is possible to produce a national subjectivity in which the nation to which one belongs, and the nationality that one experiences, is understood as positive, and commensurate with various liberal principles. Their own national subjectivity was removed and rendered distinct from a discourse of nationalism that was understood as extreme and negative. Broadly liberal values and nationally articulated values, therefore, are not mutually exclusive, and can be creatively negotiated with in order to produce a national subjectivity which embodies positive, broadly liberal values. Some situated themselves in this specific position:

> I feel pride in what the nation has done and is achieving, yes, but not pride in the same way as overweening pride, not, not the point where we're doing anybody down. (A, P8)

> What's important is to worship things like, you know, history, and musical culture, and be proud of things like that, without looking for a way to say Wales is better than other communities. (C, G3, P7)

Others expressed this position through their statements on what made good or bad members of the nation:

> Somebody who has to, who takes a certain pride in coming from that nation but not in a xenophobic sort of way … somebody who just, pride in your nation and, somebody who's interested in the history and culture of the nation, what made that nation and what made them. (A, P7)

> Somebody who is able to still see another viewpoint than their own nation also accept everything their nation stands for and not selectively picks and chooses, and acknowledges its history but is able to move on from it as well as is able to contribute in a rational manner to whatever debate is going at that time that affects that particular nation. (A, P9)

Both nationality and more cosmopolitan, rational or liberal values are given importance in the two statements above. Both values are treated as moral expectations, but there is a limit to the former – at the point where nationalism becomes problematic – and a preference for the latter.

The above discussion demonstrates that participants negotiate with discursive schemata that are inherently ethical. They negotiate with different discourses which relate to the nation and nationalism, and which confer different ethical positions on good and bad conduct, which is acceptable and unacceptable, and what is normal and problematised. While some participants rejected the nation as an important frame or consideration, most demonstrated that producing a national subjectivity involves entry into normative and ethical codes, frameworks and evaluative schemata. Three distinct discernible discourses can be identified through which the participants made sense of the questions asked, and which shaped their expressed values and ethical positions. There was, firstly, an anti-national cosmopolitanism. Secondly, a civic nationalism, wherein there were expectations that the nation and national culture were to be celebrated, but nationalistic expectations or obligations were framed within an inclusive, tolerant and broadly liberal discourse. And finally, there appeared a discourse of nationalism as chauvinistic, racist and exclusive, which was universally rejected by the participants as immoral and dangerous. Therefore, in constituting and articulating their ethical subjectivity, national discourses with their attendant ethical codes did play a role, alongside other possible discourses, but it was a particular civic and broadly liberal understanding of the nation, nationalism and national values that was mostly invoked.

Ethical Positions on the Welsh Language

This section will look at some of the participants' motivations for learning Welsh and their expectations for how others should relate to the Welsh language. It will examine the extent to which national ethical considerations shaped participants' decisions and views on these topics. Thus the question that can be asked is: to what extent are

national considerations and ethical frameworks invoked by participants in how they talk about relating to the Welsh language? Following an analysis of the collected interview data, what became clear was that while national ethical considerations were occasionally invoked, participants' opinions on relating to the Welsh language were more often shaped by other ethical considerations and ideals.

To begin with, the motivations behind learning Welsh can be explored. In this section, it is only the motivations of those participants that have moved to Wales, and who are now learning Welsh, that are considered. This is because there was a significant difference in how this group articulated their decisions to learn Welsh, compared to the participants that were originally from Wales. What was found was that while some participants expressed the decision to learn Welsh as a moral obligation articulated in "national" terms, many more participants expressed their decision to learn Welsh as motivated by a sense of obligation to their community or local area. The nation was therefore not necessarily invoked when participants spoke of learning the Welsh language in moral or ethical terms.

For some participants that had moved to Wales the decision to learn Welsh, when expressed in ethical terms, had much to do with factors other than obligations to the national context. For example, many spoke of learning Welsh out of respect, politeness or courtesy to their "communities," a position which evidences that the language is understood in relation to the local community, and not necessarily as in relation to the nation. The terms "community" was used often, and thus this reason for learning the language had a more local rather than national frame of reference:

> It makes you feel like you're becoming part of the community, rather than just being camped because that's where you're living. (A, P8)

Many participants, when talking about their motivations behind learn Welsh, articulated a sense of moral obligation, but more often than not it was to do with their impact upon their local context. For example, many of the participants that had moved to live in Wales from elsewhere stated that they were learning the language out of courtesy, respect or politeness to the local people (A, P3; A, P7; A, P8; A, P9; A, P11; C, G1, P3). One Aberystwyth participant described learning the language as "the

right thing to do" (A, P11) as they work with a large number of Welsh speakers. This frames their decision as relating to their immediate impact upon those around them. They talked about the awareness they had developed of their own linguistic impact on their Welsh speaking colleagues:

> I'd not realised before what it's like to live in a county where everybody else is speaking a different language to the one in your head, I realised that's what it's like for a lot of Welsh people most of the time, they're having to communicate in a language which is not the one they're thinking in. (A, P11)

A participant from Germany described learning Welsh as "a very important thing of respect and in order to experience any culture fully" (A, P9). A number of participants used the word "courtesy" when explaining their motivations for learning the language, with one Aberystwyth participant, when asked what motivated them to learn Welsh, replied with: "If you go to a Welsh speaking area like this, it's a courtesy to learn it, it's a courtesy to the people who live here, it a first language for them so it's politeness out of that" (A, P7). Another stated that "it's so important to at least be able to speak some of the basic bits out of politeness" (A, P8). An Aberystwyth participant stated the following when asked why they had learned Welsh:

> Well, because speaking the language of the country is part of life, is part of the country. It's only fair to try. (A, P1)

The language used by these participants denote something of a moral expectation. Participants in the second focus group also shared the view that learning the language of Wales was a sign of respect:

> When I wanted to learn Welsh, the reason I wanted to learn Welsh, was that I wanted to live here, as a sort of, it would be rude not to kind of feeling, in the sense that language is very much bound up with, the *parch* and *parchu* [respecting and respecting]. (A, G2, P6)

It was a relatively small number of participants that invoked the nation when articulating their decision to learn Welsh. And even then, there were few statements

made which articulated the decision to learn Welsh as explicitly motivated by a sense of moral obligation to their new *national* context. One participant stated that "it's about showing respect about the country you go to live in" (A, G2, P5). Several participants did speak in abstract about the importance of learning the language of the country in which they, or someone, were in. For example, one Cardiff participant, who had learned Czech when living in the Czech Republic, said that living in Wales and learning Welsh "was no different" (C, G1, P3). They stated that "they didn't want people to change language because of me" (C, G1, P3). Similar sentiments were expressed by some about their efforts to learn at least a little bit of the language of countries they were visiting, with another Cardiff participant, speaking about learning little bits of French and Spanish while on holiday, saying "I think it's important, to speak to people in their language" (C, P3).

The strongest view of all was given by a participant in the second Aberystwyth group, who invoked England's colonial past as a reason for her learning Welsh. They stated the following:

> I gave my children Welsh names, specifically … because I didn't want to be another English person coming in and dissolving the Welsh culture, I wanted to make sure that my children had Welsh names and that they knew what they meant … and I think also, for me a little bit about the whole thing with British identity, and that, kind of for me, a shame of colonialization, you know, going in and taking over, physically and culturally all the different countries, for me on a personal level, moving from England to Wales it was a very strong decision that I felt that if I was going to make that move it was my responsibility to move and take an the culture of that country instead of coming in as an English person and not making any changes at all. (A, G2, P3)

This participant's perception of Britishness and Englishness associates it with a history of colonization and "taking over, physically and culturally," and is appears that their positionality as an English person living in Wales is affected by their perception of this historic relationship. They therefore express a desire to conduct themselves in a way

that redresses this relationship, thus learning Welsh and giving their children Welsh names stems from an ethical choice to act in a certain way.

Aside from the statements above, it was surprising how few participants spoke of "national" factors in their decisions to learn Welsh, as the overwhelming motivation given in the interviews for learning Welsh centred on the participants' local context. What this indicates is that for the majority of participants, the motivation behind learning the language cannot necessarily be understood through a national frame as a "national" decision, as local and area specific considerations came into play. These local considerations were, however, often articulated in moral terms.

When the conversations in the interviews turned to participants' opinions on how people moving to Wales should relate to the Welsh language, there was a similarly limited invocation of "nationally" articulated obligations and expectations. Every single participant interviewed had made the decision to learn Welsh, therefore it was expected that they would place a high degree of importance upon people having a positive and engaged relationship with the language. The participants' answers, however, showed some nuance in how they expected others to conduct themselves. Some participants spoke of learning Welsh in ethical terms, making the point that it was polite and important to engage with the language, and that to not learn the language was "selfish." For the most part, however, participants made the point that when it came to learning the language, it was up to the individual, and that individuals' personal circumstances must be taken into account before casting judgement.

Indeed it was only a small number of participants that negatively judged those who did not learn the Welsh language upon moving to Wales:

> Unfortunately I judge them to be lazy [laughs] but, I have to not show this too often. (A, P1)

A north Wales participant, originally from England, bemoaned the lack of engagement with the local community and the language shown by people moving to their area,

and buying holiday homes[1] (NW, P2). When asked how they felt about those who did not learn the language, they waved their hand and stated "Oh! Shame, shame, I'm trying to be kind" (NW, P2). Another north Wales participant, also originally from England, expressed fairly strong feelings on the obligation for those moving to the area to learn Welsh:

> If they … come here and try and integrate and, fit in and, what's the point in moving here just if you're going to be negative about it, there's no point is there, you might as well go- as you say, just get back to England [laughs] you know if they're not going to sort of try and, definitely yeah they should integrate, learn the language and try and, try and, you know, do what, you know. (NW, P5)

Interestingly, the strongest feelings on this issue was expressed by participants who were originally from England and who had learned Welsh.

Some participants expressed contradictory thoughts. The extracts below demonstrate the sentiment that while, in abstract, people *should* learn the Welsh language, there are mitigating factors which may make this difficult. For example, an Aberystwyth participant stated: "I can understand that it's very hard to learn the language, as an adult (A, P2). A participant stated the following:

> If you're going to live in a country where that language is used then yeah it is a bit selfish and narrow minded not to use it. (A, P6)

> I wouldn't expect everybody to learn Welsh, but if you're in a situation where Welsh might be needed to or wanted to be used, then I might think that people are a bit, lazy, but I don't know if lazy is the right word, or narrow minded, or, self-centred, you know, not to learn even a few words, yeah. (A, P6)

Yet they added:

[1] The buying of holiday homes in rural Wales has long been a contentious issue. It is seen as a threat to the vitality of Welsh-speaking heartlands, and second homes were the target of arson attacks by a group of Welsh language campaigners between 1979 and 1990 (Gallent et al., 2003: 271).

> Well, there's lots of reason why somebody might not learn a language, and, so, I wouldn't presume to judge. (A, P6)

Similarly, another participant stated:

> I suppose I have a lower judgement of English people who have moved here and don't learn the language, as long as it's permanent you should make an effort. (A, P9)

And also:

> I don't judge them, I'm not a judgmental person, not everybody has the facilities to learn the languages or ever been given the opportunity. (A, P9)

There was, then, often a reluctance to pass judgement on the conduct or attitudes of others, and to make allowances for personal circumstances. National or local obligation or a sense of national responsibility often deferred to the personal circumstances of the individual.

Another Aberystwyth participant, while expressing the feeling that it was important to learn the language, also made the point that it is up to the personal choice of the individual:

> It is important, I don't think it's essential or always necessary … yeah I think it's important, but not absolutely essential. Like everything else, it's got to come down to personal choice hasn't it, you can't go round forcing people, that would be a disaster. (A, P10)

One further position taken on this issue was a statement by a participant that did not blame individuals for not learning the language, but instead blamed the situation:

> It's possible to come in, and have some idea that it's not important to learn the language … it's too easy to, to put the blame on, England, yeah, it's our fault, I think, we have to say it's important. (NW, P6)

They added:

> I think we're to blame for the situation, it's too easy to blame somebody else, ok what's happened in the past has happened in the past, we're responsible now. (NW, P6)

This statement interestingly shifts the responsibility from those moving to Wales to certain groups within the Welsh nation itself. This was one of the few statement that interpreted the issue of whether or not those moving to Wales should learn Welsh by invoking a systemic critique of norms around learning Welsh rather than a focus on individuals.

It was not only learning the language that was spoken about, some expressed the expectation that the attitude towards the Welsh language should be positive. One Aberystwyth participant, for example, stated that it was difficult to learn a language, but a little bit of effort and a positive attitude towards the language was also desirable:

> It depends on their attitude to be honest, because I can understand that it's very difficult to learn the language, as adults, also, it's hard to find the time isn't it, but if they try and learn a little bit, even *bore da*, *sut 'dych chi*, and make the effort, it's fine, it's fine, but if the attitude, and I've heard this attitude, several times, just, "well they all speak English anyway," or I know they can't speak Welsh and I say *bore da*, "MORNING!" [laughs] and that's it, attitude is the thing isn't it, attitude. (A, P2)

Some participants, however, were less concerned with people's interaction with the language, stating that Welshness or desirable "national" conduct was embodied in an "attitude" (C, G3, P4), or a willingness to "accept the culture" (C, G1, P1). One participant from the first Cardiff group argued that someone could contribute to the nation and "do a lot for Wales" without knowing the language:

> I saw a programme on BB1 in English, about the man from Admiral, an American I think, and he did so much for Wales, to be honest, he did so much … Admiral in the only company in Wales to float on the stock exchange, and now he's made one million pounds for every employee,

> and he dedicates his time now to, fundraising, Welsh charities, and he was saying, it's because Wales is his adopted home, so yeah, he doesn't speak Welsh but he does much for Wales. (C, G1, P7)

What can be seen, therefore, in some of the answers given, is the occasionally expressed expectation that people moving to Wales should relate to the language in a certain way, but more significantly, there also appears a reluctance to pass judgement on a lack of engagement with the Welsh language, and an understanding the individuals' circumstances may preclude them from learning it. There was also a small number of statements made which were less concerned with how people related to the language, in which good and bad "national" conduct and attitudes had little to do with the Welsh language.

What can be concluded from this section is that participants do not necessarily understand these ethical matters through a national frame. What was evident from the data was that when relating to a national *dispositif* such as the Welsh language, participants form an ethical relationship with it that derive from contexts other than the "national." Thus participants invoked local considerations, articulated in moral terms as obligations or expectations, as opposed to framing the decision to learn Welsh as motivated by national considerations. When it came to participants' expectations for how those who move to Wales should relate to the Welsh language, the data showed that participants can evaluate the conduct of others through different lenses or positions that can be contradictory. Thus participants can negatively judge those who do not learn Welsh – which stems from an ethical position as to what is good or bad conduct in relation to the nation – and at the same time feel that the individuals' circumstances must also be respected. This gives some insight into how participants' subjectivities are constructed; values and ethical positions that derive from one's understanding of national life are negotiated alongside other values, in this case, those that privilege the individual and their choices. In other words, participants have an understanding of the nation and nationality, and have a sense of how people should relate to the nation, and the responsibilities and obligations that they may feel are expected, however, what is seen from the participants' answers is that the individual's personal choice or prerogative is also deemed important, which is

in line with the findings above whereby broadly liberal values are often privileged over "national" values.

Conclusion

Having analysed the collected interview data, some conclusion can be drawn in response to the guiding questions of this chapter. Before answering the question as to the extent to which the nation played a role in participants' values and ethics, a summary of the discourses encountered can be provided. The question that can be asked, then, is through what discourses did the participants derive their ethical positions? Through examining the values, ethical positions and social expectations expressed by the participants, it was possible to identify three discursive logics or positions underpinning the values and ethical positions shaping the participants' statements. Some participants expressed values based on cosmopolitan discourses, which rejected the nation and nationality as important, or framed it as an impediment to cosmopolitan ideals. Liberal inclusive ideals largely took precedence over "national" ideals for these individuals. The majority of participants expressed values associated with an inclusive and tolerant "nationalism," a kind of civic nationalism, in which the nation and national culture was to be celebrated, but liberal values of tolerance and respect for others were privileged. There were some expectations expressed as to how people should relate to the nation (both Wales and "the nation" in abstract), which centred on participating in, respecting and appreciating one's nation and its culture, and a small number also mentioned the importance of conducting oneself in such a way as to be a good 'ambassador' for your nation. But these opinions were expressed in line with an understanding of nationalism or nationhood in which what was most important was inclusivity and tolerance. A number of participants invoked chauvinistic and exclusive understandings of nationalism, rejecting it as racist and xenophobic, and contrasting it against their own "nationalism" and against the kind liberal and civic national values with which they identified.

To what extent, then, did notions of the nation and nationalism figure in the participants' expressed values and ethical positions? What the data demonstrated was that for these participants, national considerations *did* shape their ethical positions, but a particular discourse of nationalism or the nation was called upon which privileges certain liberal ideals over more narrowly defined national obligations or expectations. What must be acknowledged, however, is that the context of the interview may have induced participants to express a certain ethical position. The discourse of civic nationalism and nationhood has long held moral hegemony over more ethnic articulations of nationalism in Wales, and so the participants' public statements in this interview context may be shaped by this power dynamic between competing discourses of nationalism. As was the case in the previous chapter, the desire to avoid expressing controversial or contested opinions may have led participants to avoid invoking more "exclusionary" notions of nationalism and nationhood. Nonetheless, this possibility would further support the appropriateness of understanding the national subject as inherently ethical. Different opinions, statements or comments are not stated in a vacuum, and the participants' expression of particular values, ethical positions and social expectations would itself be shaped by the context.

In the second section of this chapter, the nation figured surprisingly little in the participants' answers on how people *should* relate to the Welsh language. Following an analysis of the collected interview data, what became clear was that while nationally framed ethical considerations were occasionally spoken of, participants' motivations for learning Welsh were more often described through a sense of obligation to their local community. Participants expressed their own decision to learn Welsh as motivated by a sense of obligation to their community or local area. Their decision to learn Welsh, then, when articulated as a sense of obligation, courtesy or responsibility, was framed in local rather than national terms. When asked about how others moving to Wales should relate to the language, there was a reluctance to negatively judge those who didn't engage with the language, with many participants recognising the personal circumstances that might preclude learning the language, or stating that people could contribute to the nation in other ways. What this

demonstrates is a privileging of the individual's right to choose rather than the notion of an obligation or responsibility to learn Welsh, which once again demonstrates an ethical position on the question of learning Welsh, which invokes a more liberal and individualist ethic rather than a national ethic.

This chapter demonstrated that the nation does figure in people's ethical subjectivity. Participants often drew upon an understanding of civic nationalism in how they evaluated and considered phenomena, and constructed and positioned their ethical selves. However, national discourses were but one frame through which participants interpreted and assessed ethical issues. This was demonstrated in how participants' motivations for learning Welsh were more often described through a sense of obligation to their local community, and some participants, often ones that denied or downplayed the importance of national identity, rejected the nation as a significant category or logic in life, instead privileging universal, liberal and cosmopolitan values as what really matters. Overall, then, the sense of *national* obligation, expectation, or notions of good or bad national conduct expressed by the participants invoked a kind of civic, inclusive and multicultural nationalism. This discourse was sometimes invoked through contrasting the importance of a tolerant and inclusive nationalism against the prejudice and racism of more exclusive notions of nationalism. Therefore, in constituting and articulating their ethical subjectivity, multiple national discourses with their attendant ethical codes, normalisation and problematisations of conduct and values can play a role.

Chapter Eight – The Contextual Nature of National Subjectivities

Introduction

In order to fully appreciate and conceptualise the role of the nation in people's lives, it is important to emphasise that the national self is but one part of multiple subjectivities, and that its appearance and relevance in day-to-day life can be rather limited, and far from imminent. As Thompson writes,

> For much of the time nationality is not an everyday issue to the extent that it becomes part of conscious deliberations or reflective moments; as an occasioned occurrence self-understanding is episodic. It becomes salient only in those comparatively fleeting instances when, for example, our sense of who we are is called into question by others or when it becomes relevant for how we interact with others. (Thompson, 2007: 128)

It is necessary, then, to examine the contexts, moments and occasions in which the national self becomes important. This chapter will look closely at the contextual and temporally specific[1] nature of national subjectivities. The subjectivity-discourse approach, using the notion of discourse put forth by the Discourse Theorists, emphasises that due to the very nature of discourse, subjectivities are inherently fleeing and unstable, and that self-understanding is inherently contextual and temporally specific, as social identities are continually reiterated and reproduced. This understandings of the national subject as the product of continual reproduction in specific contexts and moments rejects any notion of the self or the national self as permanent, fixed or latent.

[1] By "temporally specific," what is meant is that the national self is encountered and constituted in certain moments, occasions or events.

Building upon research that has emphasised the fleeting, contextual and continually reproduced nature of the national self, this chapter argues that the notion of discourse used in the subjectivity-discourse thesis, and which derives from the work of the Discourse Theorists, adds a new understanding as to why and how the national self is contextual, fleeting, and temporally specific. This chapter, then, will examine how the participants' reflections on and experiences of their national selves demonstrate the need for national subjectivity to be understood as fluid, reiterated and contextual. Specifically, the chapter will look at the contexts and situations in which participants encounter the nation and their national selves. It will also, however, examine the contexts in which the participants themselves may be able to invoke the nation and their national selves, and interpret their social world through it. This last point is integral to demonstrating that participants can exercise agency as to when they constitute and invoke their national selves.

This chapter will examine how the data collected from the research participants supports and makes evident this temporally specific and contextual nature of national subjectivities. It will examine this contextual nature in two ways, structured into two sections. Firstly, it will study the temporal dimension of national subjectivity; the "when" of national subjectivity. This section is concerned with the contexts, occasions, encounters and situations in which subjects are enabled or compelled to construct their national selves. The first section will, using the collected interview data, explore then contexts, situations and encounters in which participants experience their nationality and the nation. Through studying the "when" and "where" of participants' negotiation with national subjectivities, this section will demonstrate that the participants' experiences of nationhood speak to the nature of national subjectivities put forth by this discourse-subjectivity approach. Thus this section will outline the temporally specific nature of participants' national subjectivities.

The second section will explore "national" decisions and choices made by participants, and how these demonstrate the invocation by individuals themselves of national frames in day-to-day life. National subjects are not simply jarred into existence by external stimuli. Individuals may choose to invoke the nation, nationhood, or a

"national" ethical position in how they understand certain social contexts. This second section of this chapter will examine how participants talk about choices and decisions that they have made that invoke nationhood. Certain decisions can be shaped and influenced by national subjectivities, such that a "national" frame can be invoked when making certain choices, or a decision can be framed as "national" decision (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 537, 542). The theme of making decisions based on national sentiments, considerations or values arose regularly during the interviews. Thus decisions – big and small – were articulated in the interviews as "national" choices. It is beneficial, then, to examine this significant avenue – national decisions – which further illuminates national subjectivities' contextual nature, and which gives further insight into the "when" of national subjectivities. As Miller-Idriss and Fox (2008) have explained, 'choosing the nation' is a significant invocation of nationhood in ordinary peoples' lives.

Fleeting and Contingent National Subjectivities

A number of the theorists of "everyday nationalism" discussed in Chapter One have presented a notion of the national self as either fleeting, contextual or temporally contingent. Thompson, for example, argues that nationality is not something that one 'just has', but that it is constituted in passing moments in which people establish themselves as Welsh or British (Thompson, 2007: 126-130). National self-understanding is prompted by momentary interactional encounters which invite the individual to identify through reference to the category of the nation (Thompson, 2007: 139). This conceptual understanding of nationhood therefore rejects the latency of a national identity, and situates the national self as contextually constituted. Similarly, Miller-Idriss and Fox have emphasised the importance of studying the contexts of nationhood; the "when" of the nation as well as the "what" (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 555-557). They have proposed a research programme which studies the 'practices and processes through which nationhood is reproduced in everyday life by its ordinary practitioners' (2008: 554). This attempts to situate

nationhood within everyday practices, performances, interactions, choices, talk and consumption habits (2008: 587-538).

McCrone and Bechhofer have also criticised or cast doubt on the notion of a latent national identity (Ichijo et al., 2017: 456), instead preferring to study what *can* be measured, which is acts of identification as an active process of doing. Taking inspiration from Brubaker and Cooper, who have argued that "identification" is preferential to the notion of identity as it overcomes its reifying connotations, McCrone and Bechhofer conceptualise national identity as an 'active process of doing' as opposed to seeing it as a 'noun' or a 'badge that affixes people' (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 17). Their scepticism towards a latent or identity-as-being understanding of national identity, Fox points out, is shaped by both conceptual considerations as to how they conceptualise and imagine national identity, and also pragmatic considerations, in that it is more possible to 'get at' identity when it is understood as a process of identification that can be mobilised (Ichijo et al., 2017: 444; McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015: 17). 'Getting at' identity, understood in a more latent and un-selfconscious way, is conceptually and methodologically problematic (Ichijo et al., 2017: 456).

The subjectivity-discourse framework of this thesis adds to these studies of the national self by enabling a theoretical explanation as to *why* and *how* national subjectivity is contextual, fleeting and temporally specific. This thesis, in its theoretical approach, takes the view that national subjectivity is constituted through continuous acts of re-production or reiteration, and that this is due to the nature of discourse. The closure of discourse is impossible, and social identities are unfixable, as all discourses and social identities are dislocated by an outside that both denies them and provides their condition of possibility (Torfing, 1999: 85-86, 114; Laclau, 1990: 39). As discourse is inherently incomplete, and as every signifier fails to represent the subject, the subject is never fully able to fix or finalize a subject position or a social identity (Laclau and Zac, 1994: 32). Identification is always incomplete, and as a result, the subject is 'caught in an endless and impossible search for completion and is thereby driven to perform an infinite series of identifications' (Smith, 1998: 76). The subject, however, always seeks the completion of an identity seductively promised by

discourse. The implication of this continual identification is that national subjectivities are perpetually reproduced, as subjects have to engage in continual identification with discourses, signifiers and meanings. Furthermore, identifications with concepts of the nation occur only in certain contexts, circumstances and moments. There is no permanent or continuous "national" self which lies dormant in subjects' day-to-day lives. A social identity, then, is not a series of consistent and interchangeable masks, but more a continual process of constructing one's subjectivity in relation to discursive meanings that are themselves never fixed.

The "When" of the Nation

The data collected from the participants speaks to the temporally specific and contextual nature of national subjectivities. Subjects do not perpetually experience the nation or their nationality throughout their daily lives. They "encounter" their national selves in situations and contexts, and experience nationality through certain events and occasions. The notion of national subjectivity importantly challenges the perception that social identities are stable, coherent and consistent, and supplants this perception with a more nuanced, fluid and contextual understanding of how subjects experience and construct their nationality. From the interview data collected with the research participants, it is possible to see how their day-to-day experiences with national identity involve encounters with events, symbols, tasks, products and institutions that invoke the nation. It is through interaction with these that the participants re-iterate and re-produce their national selves. Indeed some participants even recognised the mostly dormant nature of national identity. The participants quoted below were aware that most of the time, nationality, nationhood, and the nation do not play a part in how people make sense of their daily lives:

> It's not something you think of on a day to day basis, but when events happen, good or bad, then I think then it brings it home to you. (A, P10)

> It doesn't make any difference to day to day living what we are, it's only when we're at a rugby match or at a cricket match. (A, P8)

Forms and Documents

Participants were asked questions that were intended to gather when and where they felt or experienced their nationality. Additionally, the theme of the "when" of nationality often arose organically. A particularly common theme that arose was the filling in of forms, and questions on forms that ask directly about nationality. Often, when asked in interviews to describe their nationality, participants would state what it was they described themselves as on official forms. Participants would therefore often spontaneously talk about filling in the nationality question on forms:

> Usually you don't think about it every day, you just accept it, but, when you just have to fill in a form, to say, yeah, sometimes you have to think, what [am I], yeah. (C, G2, P1)

> I always put Welsh, if I fill in a form. (A, P5)

> I feel British and that's what I write to be honest on forms. (A, P2)

When discussing with one particular participant about when they state their nationality, they replied: "probably only if asked directly, yeah filling in forms" (A, P6). Indeed forms, based on what was said by participants, represented a particularly common encounter with their nationality. It was clear that for many participants, when involved in a conversation about nationality, they referred to the only other time in day-to-day life which they are *explicitly* asked to make a decision or statement about their nationality. One participant in particular spoke of declaring their nationality on forms as something of an assertion of nationality:

> I'm Welsh, yeah, I'm Welsh and, I would, probably cross out any other, or go to the other box if Welsh is not there, I feel quite strongly and passionately about that. (NW, P4)

Once again, this statement above invoked form filling spontaneously in answer to a question which asked about their nationality. For some participants who had experienced a change in their national identification, forms presented an encounter in which they could consider or reflect on their self-identification:

> Before I started learning Welsh I wrote British, I since write Welsh. (C, G2, P2)

> I tick Welsh now, since, I learned to speak Welsh, maybe before also, it depends on the situation [laughs]. (C, P2)

For many participants, then, declaring nationality or ethnicity on forms were the most crystallised instances in day-to-day life where nationality could be explicitly stated and therefore "encountered."

Passports were occasionally mentioned by participants. Passports act as symbols or embodiments of citizenship and belonging, as they are a legal certificate of one's belonging to of membership of a nation-state. They can be, therefore, a physical and legal manifestation of national identity. When passports were spoken of, they were discussed in interesting ways. For example, a Cardiff participant, originally from Germany, but now also expressing a Welsh national identity, spoke of gaining British citizenship and a British passport, and their subsequent ticking of "Welsh" on forms that ask for nationality (C, G1, P2). They then joked that their German passport was out of date. In the context, this statement, and the joke about their German passport being out of date speaks to their shifting sense of national identity, with the out-of-date passport symbolised this shift.

Another German participant, this time from the Aberystwyth sample, spoke of how they "encountered" their son's nationality through their passport. Speaking about their perception of their son's German nationality, they stated the following:

> It's very difficult because he has the content of three cultural identities if you think of English definitely, as a language as well, and, I struggle to see him as a German, he is a German citizen but doesn't have a passport, … it's difficult, it sometimes catches me out seeing him travel on a British passport but, and, his Welsh is a lot more fluent than his German, even his English is better than his German. (A, P9)

For the participant above, seeing their son travelling on a British passport "catches them out," and disrupts their own perception of their son as German.

National Events

Events were regularly spoken of as occurrences in which participants encountered their nationality and the nation. Some participants spoke of national days or events such as the Eisteddfod and St. David's day in the context of "things that made Wales Wales," but also as instances in which they felt especially "Welsh." An Aberystwyth participant spoke of the pride she felt in seeing the "passion", "excitement" and flag waving of Aberystwyth's St. David's day parade (A, P2). The same participant, when asked about the situations in which they experienced their nationalities, spoke of the National Eisteddfod and the nice feeling they get when they see the Cadeirio (Chairing) and sing the national anthem (A, P2). Indeed the National Eisteddfod, as was covered in Chapter Four, was a significant event and institution in many participants' discursive construction of Wales. It represented a particular image of a Welsh-speaking and distinctive Wales, and was a symbol of a community, and a particular conceptualisation of the nation.

Sports events were also regularly spoken of, again as a symbolic crystallisation of the nation, but also as events which invoked nationalistic sentiments, emotions and experiences. The sporting events regularly spoken about were rugby and football, with an occasional reference to the Olympics. Sporting events were spoken about, firstly, as something which brings nationality into focus:

> One of the questions you sent me … are there experiences that make me feel particularly English or Welsh or whatever, I, the first thing I thought of were sporting occasions and they're quite a big thing really, you know, when the rugby match comes on … those bring it into focus, and that's when you feel those feelings when watching sporting events mostly. (A, P11)

Sporting events were also invoked as an occasion in which nationality took on a greater importance:

> How important to you is national identity … in your lives? …

> … Well, it depends on sports [all laugh] (exchange between interviewer and C, G2, P2).

> Do you think [nationality] is important in the context of your own community?
>
> Yes I do, it mainly may just be on match days, but it is. (Exchange between interviewer and C, P2)

National sports teams also operated as physical manifestations of the nation in the sense that the national team that a participant supported was for them an indicator of their nationality. For one Cardiff participant, originally from England, their claims to Welshness was based partly on the fact that they now supported Wales at rugby (C, G2, P3). International sports teams, like national rugby teams, can therefore offer a tangible *dispositif* of the nation that an individual can identify with. And the ritualistic nature of international sports fixtures provides regular occasions for individuals to encounter their national selves through their investment in the success or failure of "their" national team.

Many of the interviews took place during and after the 2016 European Football Championship, in which the Welsh national football team enjoyed unprecedented success. This was something that certainly influenced the answers of a number of the participants, but it further highlights the temporal nature of national identity:

> Then of course there's things like the football going on, we've all been following Wales because they've been doing so well, if they hadn't been doing so well I don't think we'd have been that interested but we've all been cheering them on and, rugby's another one, I dunno everybody seems to rally when the Six Nations comes on [laughs] these Euros have been really exciting, they have haven't they! [Laughs] and I'm not a big football fan, I have to say, but something like that when you can get behind the boys or, you know the flag, and all the singing, tremendous

> the other night … and oh the singing, it gave you goose bumps! It did though didn't it! Yeah! My goodness! (A, P10)

Political events also caused participants to experience their nationality. The same participant as above spoke of how they became aware of Wales' distinctness through a political event:

> The first thing I can remember that ever made me think about Wales being Welsh, this is going to sound silly now, but it was, all the like, Free Wales Army nonsense going on, with the burning of cottages second homes kind of thing, and I can remember that striking me as, oh gosh, are we different then? … So I think that was probably the first time I though, we are a bit different then, so we're, you know, Welsh must be different to the rest of the UK. (A, P10)

The referendum on EU membership was mentioned by a number of participants. It occurred towards the end of the research interviews conducted in Aberystwyth, and before the research was conducted in Cardiff and north Wales. Once again, the proximity of some interviews to the Brexit referendum shaped the answers of some participants, and demonstrated that feelings of nationality, and the encountering of one's national subjectivity, had a temporal dimension. A number of participants, for example, stated that they felt European, alongside other national identities they expressed, a statement which in the political context at the time of the interviews can be seen as a political statement. Indeed a European identity was joked about on more than one occasion, with one participant stating the following:

> In school I was English, not British, and now, I'm a bit British and a bit European also, but not for very long [all laugh]. (NW, G1, P5)

An interview with one Aberystwyth participant was conducted the day after the referendum. When asked if there were events that highlighted their nationality to them, they replied "Well, today!" (A, P10) The second Aberystwyth focus group was conducted in the immediate aftermath of the referendum. For two participants in particular, the referendum had demonstrated to them the link between significant political events and national identity:

> I think that national identity crystallises in times of national stress, perhaps this is one of those stresses that will crystalize a new national identity. (A, G2, P5)

> Makes you wonder how much anyone, really has a sense of, national identity, when it isn't sort of stirred up by a few politicians, you know, if there weren't some political issue at stake, how many people would really think about whether they had a national identity. (A, G2, P6)

Other participants noted how the referendum had made them aware of their nationality or had made them confront their nationality. As was discussed in Chapter Four, a number of participants from the second Aberystwyth group had their perceptions of "their" nation shattered by the referendum result; an event which their national self-understanding was called into question. In other words, their understanding of what it meant to be British, a concept with which they identified, was challenged, and their national subjectivities had been thrown into relief by the event. This event, then, had caused the participants to encounter and consider their national selves, and made the "national" dimension more imminent. The referendum caused one participant in particular to also have to engage with practical issues relating to citizenship. During an interview the week before the referendum, when asked about the importance of nationality, this German participant stated:

> It is right now specifically with the EU referendum coming up, I've never wanted to become a British citizen, so, and I don't envisage I will ever do, but next week is a lot of uncertainty for us, for our personal situation whatever that will mean, what it will mean for my son … so, no it's never been [important], but I'm forced now to take it more seriously. (A, P9)

Particular events that invoke the nation, then, punctuate daily lives and provide the contexts in which subjects are enabled and often compelled to construct their national subjectivities.

Difference and Sameness

The final theme that emerged from this line of questioning into the temporally specific and contextual nature of national subjectivities was the experiencing of nationality (or nationalities) through difference or sameness. Encountering difference through experiencing different national contexts was mentioned by a number of participants. One participant from the first north Wales group spoke of how the different national contexts in which they lived affected their self-identity:

> When I lived in America I felt European, but when I lived once again in England I felt Welsh, but when I travel abroad, I'm British, therefore it changes from place to place. (NW, G1, P4)

A participant from the third Cardiff focus group, who had lived in England for many years, spoke of how "if you're away from home, it brings something out," and mentioned a saying that their mother used to say to them: "gwell Cymro yw Cymro oddi cartref" ("A better Welshman is a Welshman away from home" (C, G3, P4). This same idiom was mentioned by another Cardiff participant who had also lived in England for many years, who stated the following:

> When you live in England, yeah, there is a saying, *y Cymro gorau Cymro oddi adref*, the best Welshman is the Welshman away from home … and I bought Katherine Jenkins CDs, there were groggs around the kitchen, and I wore Wales T shirts in the market and the rest of it. (C, G2, P4)

An Aberystwyth participant, originally from England, spoke of a similar experience of encountering their nationality through moving to Wales:

> I'm simultaneously more and less English than I used to be, because, I'm much more aware of nationality since moving to Wales … so I sort of define myself more in opposition to, and I don't mean opposition in a negative way, it's just I live with people who identify as Welsh very openly and proudly, so sometimes you can't help but define yourself in the same way but because I'm not Welsh I'm English, and proud of that, so it makes me slightly more conscious of being English, but that might

> be the case If I went abroad, in the same way I might define myself in opposition to someone else's nationality. (A, P11)

Two Cardiff participants, originally from Wales, and who had attended school and university respectively in England, spoke of encountering their Welshness partly through the "stick" they received, and what the latter participant described as "racism:"

> I went to University in London, therefore there [were] lots of [English people], and I feel, more Welsh there, with them and … lots of, as students, competition there, because, [you] got quite a lot of stick sometimes, had to defend yourself [laughs]. (C, P2)

> When I was eleven years old, I had to go to school in England, and I wasn't very happy about it, because, while there was no racism … in the school, there [were] lots of people who came from other countries, there was no racism with them, except against the Welsh, therefore I feel, more Welsh after that. (C, G3, P5)

An Aberystwyth participant spoke about how their sense of Englishness was flagged to them by interactions with Welsh speakers at work:

> Walking into the staff room, if there's couple of Welsh speakers in the staff room and they're the only people in there and they're speaking in Welsh and I sit down it won't be long before the conversation switches to English so you can't help but be aware of that … I guess they don't mind switching, they probably switch without realizing sometimes of thinking about it but it's almost like a guilt to feel, when they switch, they were having a nice conversation in their native language and I came along and then you switched so that makes me aware of, my Englishness. (A, P11)

A number of participants spoke of encountering differences abroad. For example, an Aberystwyth participant who has spent time in Africa mentioned this experience when asked about the instances in which they had been made aware of their nationality:

> I think certainly when you go to places where the culture is so different, especially somewhere like Africa … and, the whole different culture, religion, included in that. When it's vastly different, it brings home the difference. (A, P3)

For some of the participants, particularly those who had multiple national identities, their national positionality was invoked through interaction with people from either their own or other cultures. Encountering people of the *same* nationality was occasionally spoken of, with one Cardiff participant describing that bond or recognition as being "like a masonic handshake" (C, P1). An interesting example of the encountering of sameness and difference, and the effect of this on one's national subjectivity, was given by a German participant. This participant, when asked if they "feel" German, answered with the following:

> No, no, I mostly feel German in interaction with other Germans then I also feel how much I have moved away from being German [laughs] I feel I am integrated very much here. (A, P9)

For this participant, interaction with another German person both reminds them of their German-ness and makes them encounter difference due to their having been living away from Germany for so long. The participant stated that they felt a loss due to their living away from Germany, their "struggling to speak as fluently as [they] would like to," and the distance this causes between them and their family. For them, interaction with other Germans is a reminder that they "can't live in two places at the same time" and the extent to which they've "moved away from being German" (A, P9). Encountering difference or sameness, then, can be an instance in which nationality is flagged and encountered. It is an occurrence that brings into relief one's national self, and enables and potentially compels subjects to negotiate with their national existence. They are further instances in which individuals construct national subjectivities and articulate phenomena through the invocation of national frames.

The above discussion demonstrates that the national self is encountered and constructed in contexts and situations which invoke the participants' nationhood. There is no evidence from the collected interview data that there is anything

approaching a latent or a continuous identity, as nationality and national identity is described in relation to temporally specific contexts. This attests to the need for any exploration or theoretical explanation of the national self to take into account that national subjectivities are contextual. The theoretical implications of this subjectivity-discourse understanding is that national subjectivities are fluid and flexible, as reiterated social identities can invoke different meanings in different contexts.

National Decisions

In order to examine the invocation of nationhood in ordinary daily life, and to demonstrate the temporally specific and contextual nature of national subjectivities, this section will explore "national" decisions as articulated by the participants. That is, this section is concerned with how decisions and choices can be shaped and influenced by national subjectivities, in the sense that decisions can be made through invoking a "national" frame (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 537, 542). The above section looked at the contexts which compel or encourage participants to invoke their national self, as they encountered situations which directly flag the nation and nationhood, yet subjects can also choose to interpret a context through invoking a national frame. They can exercise agency in how they constitute their subjectivities and in how they discursively frame and understand social phenomena. National choices are decisions made in exactly this way. Miller-Idriss and Fox explain how 'reading a nationalist newspaper or sending one's child to a minority-language school' can be defined and experienced as national choices (2008: 542). Some of these decision are explicit and conscious. In these instances, these choices can 'become important occasions for the enactment and reproduction of national sensibilities' (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008: 545). National decisions can also be unconscious, automatic and unreflective. Miller-Idriss and Fox write of a decision process that mirror choosing a toilet – "the signs are on the doors telling people where to go" (2008: 544). Miller-Idriss and Fox argue that making unconscious decisions in no way 'enfeebles nationhood'; rather unreflective decision still 'powerfully reinforce their national

logics by reproducing nationhood as a taken-for-granted fixture of the social world' (2008: 544).

"National" decisions also have an ethical dimension. Choices are made based on the individuals' sense of the right things to do, and if the decision is influenced by national considerations, then it will reflect, at least in part, the individuals' understanding of norms and ethical codes which relate to the nation and national conduct. Therefore, looking at decisions that participants have framed as national decisions enables a glimpse into how the participants' national subjectivities, and the ethical positions that derive from these, have shaped their conduct and their life-choices.

However, there is an issue relating to how participants narrate these decisions. It must be acknowledged that certain decisions may be expressed through national frames only because of the context of the interview, and that decisions were perhaps shaped by more complex or entirely different factors. It may be also, as Miller-Idriss and Fox stated, that decisions now expressed through national frames were in fact unconscious or unreflective decisions. Yet exploring these narratives, as they were expressed by the participants, still provide insight into how national selves are constructed and narrated. These narratives about decision making enable a glimpse into the ethical and moral positions that participants express through their decisions, and therefore the national subjectivities, even if only in the interviews, that participants construct through this narration.

National Decisions: Raising Children

National decisions come in many shapes and forms. They can be everyday small decisions. For example, one Cardiff participant spoke of his desire to "buy things from Wales to help the country along," and wished that "people would have more of an awareness of the value … of things [produced] in the country [Wales]" (C, G1, P2). Larger decisions were more often expressed as choices that were made with national considerations in mind. Decisions made in relation to raising children were spoken about from time to time. For a small number of participants, the naming of their children was framed as a decision coloured by nationality:

> I gave my children Welsh names, specifically … because I didn't want to be another English person coming in and dissolving the Welsh culture, I wanted to make sure that my children had Welsh names and that they knew what they meant. (A, G2, P3)

Institutional settings often force decisions defined in national terms. Welsh-medium schools in Wales offer what Miller-Idriss and Fox describe as an institution that structures choices at the point of entry (2008: 544). Many of the participants had made decisions on which language their children should be educated in. This was an especially salient topic for the Cardiff participants. For some people, sending their children to a Welsh or an English medium school is an automatic decision, based on linguistic preference and pragmatic concerns. For some participants, however, the decision on the medium of education was expressed as having been made with a conscious awareness of linguistic and national identity. In Cardiff in particular, this is often a conscious and active decision that parents make, as most children in the area are educated through primarily English medium education (StatsWales, 2018b). Parents can make the decision based on their own internal logic of nationhood. A number of participants spoke about the education of their children:

> Well, I'd like my son to speak Welsh, I'm expecting at the moment, yeah so, I would like my children to speak Welsh and have that national identity, also because I don't feel I have a particularly strong feeling like that, but … I'd like them to go to Welsh school. (C, G2, P3)

Another participant from the same group as above stated that their children were attending a Welsh language school, and that they themselves hadn't been keen on this decision at the time. However, this participant, who had earlier described how learning Welsh had changed their feelings about their nationality, identifying as Welsh now rather than British, and how they now felt like they've 'taken a step into [a] new world', was now in "complete agreement" with this decision (C, G2, P2).

One participant from the first north Wales group spoke of sending their children to Welsh language school, despite their not speaking it themselves:

> When I was younger … my wife and I, we thought that we were doing our bit for Welsh by deciding to send our kids to Welsh schools, there was no time to do more, working, et cetera. (NW, G1, P6)

Interestingly, they described this decision as "doing their bit for Welsh," presenting the decision as being influenced by wider linguistic and national considerations. A north Wales participant spoke retrospectively about the language their now grown-up children had been educated in, and spoke with significant regret that they hadn't sent them to a Welsh language school:

> We have two sons … but when they went to school, there was no idea of sending them to a Welsh school, but if I could go back about, fifteen years, I would certainly send them to Welsh school … I think, if there was another chance, with another generation, I'd send them straight to Welsh school … looking back on it, I feel as if I've let my children down, by not giving them that experience … I feel quite, quite ashamed really, the climate was completely different, but I wasn't strong enough to withstand that climate either, so I feel guilty about that, and I do looking back on it feel guilty. (NW, P6)

The earlier decision by the participant to send their children to an English-medium school appeared not have been a decision at all, it was an unreflexive and unconscious choice. What is interesting, however, is how this decision is now perceived by this participant, and that the priorities and principles that are now invoked by them casts their past decision in a new, negative light.

A particularly interesting decision was made by a participant from the third Cardiff group, who stated that they had sent their children to a Welsh medium primary school and an international secondary school. The motivation behind this decision had a strong ethical consideration, as they explained:

> I thought that they had to understand their own identities, in Wales, and then go to the international school, to be internationalists, because, I'm very fond of Wales, and Welsh, and things like that, but, not, nationalist … you have to be internationalists, I think. (C, G3, P7)

This participant hoped that their children would "meet lots of people from different countries and they think that they, have two or three national identities" (C, G3, P7). This participant's decisions regarding their children's education was therefore influenced by the importance to the participant of both their Welshness and the Welshness of their children, as well as the importance of international and multicultural perspectives. This decision reflects a particular ethical position which draws on cosmopolitan and national values. As is seen from these statements, the medium of children's education can be a decision which is significantly shaped by parents' ethical positions, and which can reflect the national logics which parents internalise.

More local considerations also played a role in participants' decisions as to the medium of instruction for their children. An Aberystwyth participant who had moved to the area from England, and whose child was attending a Welsh-medium primary school, spoke of how they would rather send their child to a Welsh-medium secondary school:

> In my head at the moment I'm thinking Welsh … I don't know, some parents have said that you can have less opportunities if you don't [do it] in English and you have less of a pool of teachers to choose from if they've got to be Welsh speaking, so the quality of teaching might be less … but, yeah for me it would probably be a Welsh speaking … we chose to live here and that's what happens round here. (A, P6)

What's being shown above is a decision which, despite pragmatic concerns, respects the languages' place in their area ("we chose to live here and that's what happens round here"), which in itself is an expression of an ethical position in which local norms are recognised and respected.

Consuming the Nation

National decisions were also evident in how some participants attempted to engage with and consume Welsh language culture and society. A Cardiff participant spoke of

how their time in England had led them to buying Kathrine Jenkins CDs and wearing "Wales" shirts to engage with their Welshness. A participant from north Wales spoke of a number of their friends who had Welsh dragons, Celtic bands and the word "Cymru" tattooed on them (NW, P4). This participant implied that as these friends didn't speak Welsh, this was another way that they could express their identity. A north Wales participants spoke of how the gifts and cards that they send friends and family in England follow a Welsh theme:

> I do my best you see, at one time I did send everybody Welsh cards with Welsh writing on them … I like to get them that have been produced in Wales, you can see them on the back you know, oh yes I do my best from the point of view of advertising, codi'r proffeil (raise the profile), you know [laughs] (NW, P3)

One Cardiff participant in particular spoke of actively trying to surround themselves with Welsh culture and Welsh language media. They immersed themselves in the Welsh-language, and in Welsh national life:

> I always enjoyed reading Welsh, but when I moved to Barry and getting really involved, and making an enormous effort to try and live everyday in Welsh, I listen to Radio Cymru all the time. (C, P1)

This participant had made the decision to live apart from their husband, who lived in England, in order to immerse themselves in this language and culture, stating:

> I love my Welsh enough to leave my home, my family, my husband my daughter, so it says something [laughs]. (C, P1)

While this last example is a rather radical decision that appeared to have been motivated by a desire to fully engage with Welsh culture and the Welsh language, these examples nonetheless demonstrate the invocation of national frames and considerations in decisions that people make and in how they conduct themselves.

Learning Welsh as a National Decision

The decision to learn Welsh was also expressed by many participants as a decision motivated by their understanding of Welshness, which contained a particular place of significance for the Welsh language. This was especially the case for those participants originally from Wales, as participants from elsewhere expressed their motivations to learn Welsh differently, as was explained in Chapter Seven. For some participants, learning Welsh was a way to complete, strengthen or fulfil a subject position as Welsh, which for them was tied to the Welsh language. For these participants, it appears that learning the language was a means to overcome a perceived deficit in their national self-understanding.

One participant spoke of the jealousy that they used to experience whenever they heard people speaking Welsh (C, G3, P2). This participant, and most of the group that she was interviewed with, spoke of how they felt more Welsh having learned the language. Another Cardiff participant spoke of deciding to learn the language after hearing a film crew speaking it in their village. Having since learned Welsh, they stated that they are "more Welsh now" (C, P2). This participant went on to state that: "if you say you're Welsh, then [people] sort of expect you to speak Welsh, it's slightly embarrassing that you can't" (C, P2). This also appeared to be the case for the participant, quoted in Chapter Five, that had spoken about setting up a Welsh learner group in an English town, where the motivation had been "to strengthen our identity" and to be able to say more than "bore da" (C, G2, P4). The decision to learn Welsh, then, was framed as a national decision as the incentive for or reasoning behind undertaking this route was at least in part an achievement or fulfilment of a sense of Welshness.

Among Cardiff participants, the loss of Welsh from the family, and the sense that something had been lost or was missing, was often spoken of as a significant motivator for learning the language. As was discussed in Chapter Six, these individuals were usually participants whose sense of a Welsh nationality had changed and strengthened since learning Welsh. The implication is that their having lost the Welsh language from the family left them with a sense that their claim to a Welsh identity was incomplete, and that this was a motivation behind the decision to learn Welsh.

Family and heritage would also play a role in this decision, as the sense that the language had once belonged to the family translated into a sentimental attachment to it. For example, this participant spoke very fondly of what the language meant to her parents, despite their not speaking it:

> [My parents were] non-Welsh-speaking, but with a tremendous desire to speak it, they would put little Welsh words in, my mother got it all wrong, so did my father, oh would you pass the *hallt* dear, they got the word wrong [laughs]. (C, P1)

While this participant had expressed the importance of the Welsh language to their nationality, and for a reclaiming of their Welshness having moved away to England for many years, their decision to learn Welsh had been shaped by their desire to "take back lost property" that was "part of my family." Their decision to learn Welsh can be seen as the result of national considerations, their understanding of their nationhood, and the role of the Welsh language in their familial identity and their sense of heritage.

Some participants spoke of other motivations for learning the Welsh language. Having Welsh speaking children or grandchildren was mentioned by a few participants. There was rarely a single, isolated reason expressed as a motivation for learning the language, as their decision had been motivated by a range of factors. Therefore, while learning Welsh was occasionally expressed as motivated by pragmatic reasons such as helping with their children's or grandchildren's homework, the decision to learn the language was often also influenced by an emotional desire to speak the language, a sentimental connection to it, or a sense that something was lacking from their "national" sense of self. What this data shows, then, is a number of participants articulating their decisions to learn Welsh through invoking national frames, narrating these choices as having been influenced by their relationship to their national existence.

To sum up, this section has examined decisions that participants have expressed as "national" decisions, shaped and influenced by the participants' national subjectivities, and the ethical positions that derive from these. These range from the mundane,

encompassing such decisions as the products that the participants buy and consume, to the significant, such as deciding the linguistic medium of children's education and the decision to learn Welsh. Looking at how participants express certain choices as national decisions avoids the over-simplistic implication that national subjects are only jarred into existence by external stimuli such as rugby matches and administrative forms. National subjectivities are not necessarily always imminent, but the nation as a frame and logic can be deployed by individuals to make sense of the world around them. This is an important dimension of the national self to understand, as it situates the national subject as an active agent in how they can invoke certain frames in how they interpret the social world around them. Thus individuals can indeed exercise agency in how they frame, evaluate and interpret phenomena.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to reiterate, using the notion of discourse put forth by the Discourse Theorists, that due to the very nature of discourse, national subjectivities are inherently fleeting and unstable, and that self-understanding is inherently contextual, temporally specific and continually reiterated and reproduced. This contextual nature of the national self was explored in the participants' reflections on their national identities and interactions with the nation. The chapter looked first of all at the contexts and situations in which participants encountered the nation and their national selves. The national self was described as being constituted, encountered and invoked in relation to a number of contexts and events. These included events such as national festivals and days, sports games and political events, the encountering of difference when abroad or when in a new or unfamiliar national context, and instances in which administrative forms or documents either demand one's national identity, or crystallise one's nationality into a legal document, as passports do. These moments, occasions and events flagged the nation, and were an external invocation of the individual's national existence.

The second section, through looking at how participants invoked the nation as a frame of reference in certain decisions they had made, examined the contexts in which the participants themselves may be able to invoke the nation and their national selves, and interpret their social world through it. Both significant and mundane decisions were articulated as having been influenced by national considerations. Consuming Welsh products and engaging with particular Welsh-language media were articulated as decisions made in relation to national motivations. Some participants also spoke about choosing the language of children's education, a decision that was articulated as largely influenced by factors relating to national identity. Indeed a significant decision that participants spoke about was the decision to learn Welsh. While some participants spoke of practical motivations for learning Welsh, for those participants originally from Wales in particular, the decision to learn Welsh was often articulated as motivated by participants' discursive understanding of Welshness, which privileged the Welsh language. These participants had a particular conception of Welshness in which the Welsh language plays an important role, and this derived from their discursive understanding of Welshness, and often a familial history or link with the language. Some participants therefore expressed a loss, or a "missing something," or simply a desire to speak it, and the majority of participants stated that having learned Welsh, their Welshness had strengthened and that they felt more Welsh. That many participants chose to articulate these decision through a national lens enables a glimpse into how phenomena can be made sense of through it, and demonstrates potential occasions in which individuals themselves choose to invoke national frames in how they interpret the phenomena. This second section, then, sought to demonstrate that participants can exercise agency as to when they constitute and invoke their national selves.

While their narrations of these choices may have been influenced by the interviews themselves, in that national identity was the topic under discussion, this nonetheless further demonstrates that national subjectivities are constructed – and national frames are invoked – in relation to certain contexts and instances. Therefore, it can be stated that the above further supports the position that any approach to understanding the national self and the relationship between the nation and its

denizens must take into account the continually reproduced and contextual nature of national subjectivities.

Conclusion

This conclusion will tie together the key insights into the national self that have derived from an analysis of the collected interview data from a subjectivity-discourse approach. It will provide an answer to the primary research question, which was:

- What insights can the concepts of subjectivity and discourse provide to the study of the national self?

The purpose of this thesis was to argue that the discourse-subjectivity approach to understanding the national self provides a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the nature of the national self.

The thesis argued that such an approach advances upon the concept of "national identity" as it is able to delve deeper into the nature of the national self. In this conclusion, the extent to which the subjectivity-discourse thesis provides a better approach than the concept of "national identity" can be considered. This provides an answer to the first research sub-question, which was

- To what extent can the concepts of subjectivity and discourse provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the national self that "national identity"?

Through analysing the collected interview data, this thesis has been able to provide insights into a number of areas, including how nations are discursively constructed, how nationality is normatively understood and conceptualised, how a national subjectivity is constituted in relation to the discursive understanding of the nation, the ethical dimension and nature of the national subject, and the contextual, fleeting and temporally specific nature of the national self. These thematic expositions have provided answers to the second and third research sub-questions, which respectively sought to investigate two key aspects of the national self. These were:

- What insights can a subjectivity-discourse approach provide into how the national self is formed, maintained, lived and experienced?

And:

- To what extent can the subjectivity-discourse approach uncover the ethical and normative dimensions and implications of the national self?

Having analysed the data, and having presented numerous aspects of the national self that the subjectivity-discourse approach has illuminated, conclusions can be outlined as to the suitability and capacity of this approach to provide a nuanced and comprehensive account of the production of individuals as national subjects. This conclusion, then, will appraise the contributions to the study of the nation and the national self that the subjectivity-discourse approach can make.

This conclusion will firstly restate the theoretical framework that it advances. Secondly, it will review the empirical findings and observations so as to recount the insights that this approach can make into the national self. This section will begin with a summary of the empirical chapters, followed by a reflection on some unexpected outcomes that arose from the research, before turning to answering the three research sub-questions. Thus it will examine how the subjectivity-discourse framework advances upon the notion of "national identity," it will restate the insights that this approach can make into the formation and nature of the national self, and it will set out the extent to which this approach uncovers the ethical and normative dimensions of the national subject. Finally, this conclusion will end with a statement as to the theoretical and empirical contributions it makes to various literatures.

Restatement of Theoretical Framework

In Chapter One, a review of the literature on the nation, nationalism and national identity was provided. The chapter critiqued the notion of national identity, and reviewed and appraised the contributions of a number of authors who have written about the topic. It examined issues around the concept of "identity," and explored some of the more valuable contributions to the study of the national self, which often use broadly postmodern approaches, so as to build upon this research. However, in order to advance further in the understanding of the national self, Chapter Two

proposed a different framework, based on the potentially invaluable insights that a poststructuralist conceptualisation of the national self could provide.

The subjectivity-discourse theoretical framework that Chapter Two set out has drawn upon the work of Michel Foucault and the Essex School of Discourse Theory in order to utilise their sophisticated theorising of discourse, the subject and ethics in building a conceptualisation of the national self. It provides a picture of the nature of national subjectivity. The theoretical framework was broken down into two broad but interrelated aspects of the national self with which it was concerned. Firstly, the theoretical framework was concerned with explaining how the individual becomes a national subject, and what its conceptualisation of discourse and subjectivity tell us about the nature of national subjectivity. This part of the framework, then, explained how national subjects are formed, and how individuals are able to affect a degree of agency in their self-formation as subjects. The framework stipulates that individuals are formed as subject by their entry into games of truth and power (Foucault, 1997: 289). Social reality is discursive, which means that how individuals understand their social existence is mediated by the interpretative framework of discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 115). People's self-understanding is shaped by the struggle for discursive hegemony in society, as social meaning is influenced by the relative power relations between compelling frameworks which attempt to hegemonise their discursive 'truths' (Smith, 1998: 71). Therefore antagonistic social forces battle for hegemony in how certain elements or "nodal points," such as the nation, a national language or ethnicity, are discursively articulated (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 112; Torfing, 1999: 98).

Using the work of the Discourse Theorists, the framework makes certain claims about the nature of discourse. The emptiness of discursive concepts such as "Wales" or "the nation" means that these constructs are 'broad surfaces of inscription', and are impossible to 'fix' with discursive meaning (Torfing, 1999: 98-99). As a result, social identities which derive from such constructs are inherently unstable and unfixed. This reveals much about how the subject is formed. As certain nodal points and the discourses that populate them with meaning are unfixed (Laclau, 1990: 28), so too are subject positions such as a nationality. As discourse is always lacking, and is an absent,

incomplete fullness, and as every signifier fails to represent the subject, the subject is never fully able to fix or finalize an identity (Laclau and Zac, 1994: 32). This means that subjectivities are fleeting, contextual and temporally specific, and that the notion of a latent self is a fantasy. There is, consequently, the possibility for creative negotiation in how individuals construct their understanding of their national context and their national selves. The unfixity of discourse means that subjectivities are fleeting and continually reproduced (Smith, 1998: 76), and individuals can construct their national context and their national selves differently in different contexts. Therefore, subjects can creatively and differently construct their discursive understanding of their national context and their own subjectivities. The emptiness and unfixity of discourse also means that the nation – this broad surface of inscription – can be articulated through a wide range of meanings. The framework describes how such empty discourses are populated with meaning, despite their unfixity. Any system of meaning 'relies upon a discursive exterior that partially constitutes it' (Howarth, 2004: 266). In other words, a constitutive outside, the 'other', is a referent against which the 'inside' is defined.

The second part of the theoretical framework relates to the second aspect of the national self that the thesis sought to investigate; the ethical and normative dimensions of the national subject. This particular dimension of the national subject was explored because the work of Foucault and the Discourse Theorists make it possible to bring to light this important and underexplored dimension. This is important because how one perceives how the world 'is' and how it 'ought' to be has significant implications for how they live in it. The framework's claim is that in forming national subjectivities, subjects are negotiating with discursive and normative schemata which can impact their values, conduct and worldviews. The individual's entry into discursive social structures means entry into moral systems and ethical schemata which confer expectations and codes of conduct (Davies & Harré, 1990: 43-59). Negotiation with discourse therefore confers an 'ensemble of beliefs' upon the subject, and 'incite certain practices' (Smith, 1998: 58; 63). This second aspect is interrelated to the first because, due to the nature of discourse, it must also be emphasised that the unfixity of discourse and subjectivity means that ethical and normative positions are also unfixed. Individuals therefore have a degree of agency in

how the creatively construct their ethical selves, and they have a degree of freedom to invoke different ethical and normative positions in different contexts.

Review of Empirical Findings: Insights, Observations and Conclusions

This section will examine and tie together the insights that the subjectivity-discourse framework has been able to make into the nature of the national self based on the analysis of the empirical data. Firstly, it will summarise the empirical chapters. Secondly, this section will reflect on some unexpected outcomes of the empirical research which shaped the development of the thesis. It will then move on to answering the three research sub-questions. The section will address the first research sub-question which inquired about the extent to which the subjectivity-discourse approach to studying the national subject can improve upon the concept of "national identity". Following this, it will address the ways that the thesis has been able to answer the second research sub-question, which is: what insights can a subjectivity-discourse approach provide into how the national self is formed, maintained, lived and experienced? Finally, it will address the ways that the thesis has been able to answer the third research sub-question about the extent to which the ethical and normative dimensions of national subjectivities can be uncovered.

Summary of Empirical Chapters

Chapter Four was concerned with how participants produced, negotiated with, and understood various national constructs, such as Wales, England and Great Britain. It began with an examination of how the participants understood the concept of the nation in abstract, exploring the notion of the nation as an empty signifier. Following this, a section focused on how participants spoke about national constructs such as Wales, England, and the United Kingdom, again looking at the extent to which these constructs are open and empty signifiers. The limitations of this openness and emptiness were also discussed, drawing on the experiences of participants with Brexit

and the effect it had on how they conceptualised and understood Britishness. Finally, the discursive operations involved in constructing and articulating these constructs were closely examined using the theoretical framework and its understanding of discourse.

Chapter Five was concerned with how the participants understood nationality, and the discursive norms and rules through which they understood, evaluated and interpreted it. The chapter explored the ethical and normative dimension of the national subject, and examined the different notions of nationality from which the participants drew their normative understanding of it. It sought to study the extent to which participants engaged with a particularly hegemonic understanding of nationality which privileged relatively fixed identity markers such as birthplace and blood. Having asked participants their opinions on the possibility of changing nationality, the chapter presented the participants understanding of the fixity of nationality on a spectrum, from fluid to fixed. People on the fluid end of the spectrum had an understanding of nationality in which the identity markers privileged were those that are changeable. On the opposite end of the spectrum, nationality was evaluated through a set of discursive norms and rules, derived from the participants' discursive understanding on nationality, which privileged more fixed identity markers.

Chapter Six looked at how the participants discursively understood the Welsh language, its role in the Welsh nation and Welshness, and the role it played in their *own* sense of Welshness. The chapter began with an examination of how the participants understood the languages' role in the Welsh nation, before looking at the subtle differences in how they deployed the language in their own claim to Welshness depending on whether they were originally from Wales or not. This section also encountered a Welsh learner identity in which the national implications of the language was absent. Finally, through looking at how the participants articulated the languages' role in Welshness, this chapter looked at the different discourses of Welshness which the participant drew on, and how they drew on different discourses at different times, depending on whether they were talking about the languages' meaning to them, or the languages' role in the nation and Welshness in abstract.

Chapter Seven was also concerned with the ethical dimension of national subjectivity. It began with an analysis of the values, ethical positions and social expectations that had been expressed by the participants, and an examination of how these reflected the invocation of national and other discourses and ethical codes that derive from them. The chapter was concerned with how, and the extent to which national subjectivities shape the values expressed by participants, and therefore how the participants negotiate with and internalise ethical positions which derive from various discourses. It found that ethical positions relating to the nation largely conformed to a liberal, civic understanding of nationalism and the nation, and that liberal values were overall prioritised. The chapter, in its second part, also explored ethical positions in relation to the Welsh language, so as to examine the extent to which interaction with, feelings on, and expectations for how other should relate to the language are shaped by *national* ethical considerations

Chapter Eight, through an analysis of the collected interview data, examined the contextual dimension of national subjectivities and their temporally specific nature. Using the notion of discourse utilised in the subjectivity-discourse thesis, this chapter built on research that demonstrated the national self's fleeting and contextual nature. This chapter looked at the contexts and situations in which participants encountered the nation and their national selves. Furthermore, through an exploration of how the participants expressed decisions through national (as well as other) frames, this chapter also sought to identify how individuals themselves can invoke the nation, national values and ethical positions in day-to-day life.

Reflections

Before moving on to re-appraising and recounting the conclusions that can be made following the analysis of the empirical data, it is necessary to reflect on some of the unexpected outcomes which shaped the thesis, and influenced its development. While the selection of three locations in Wales gave the research the potential to compare and contrast the experiences and reflections of Welsh language learners in different contexts in Wales, it became clear that regional differences were somewhat

muted in the collected data. While local and regional differences were evident to a degree, particularly when comparing the data collected from Cardiff to the other two sites, other fault lines emerged which relegated regional distinctions to but one point of comparison, and other issues precluded assigning too much importance to the regional dimension.

Firstly, there were significant differences in the data between those who had moved to Wales from elsewhere, and those originally from Wales. The differing experiences and positionalities of these two groups became the most significant and richest cleavage within the sample. Secondly, the distinctions between the Cardiff sample and those of the other two locations seemed to stem from the fact that the Cardiff sample has a much higher proportion of local people in the group, whereas the interview participants in the other two locations were overwhelmingly not originally from Wales. This may be due to the higher likelihood that those moving to rural "heartlands" Wales will engage with the Welsh language. From what was encountered in the Cardiff sample, it could be inferred that Welsh learners in the capital are more likely to be local, as those moving to the area encounter a different socio-linguistic environment to those moving to rural west and north Wales, and are perhaps less likely to encounter the language to the same degree. Thirdly, the dispersed nature of the north Wales sample of participants meant that it was harder to consider this sample as a singular group.

Ultimately, the lack of distinction between locations led to the analysis of the empirical data being structured along thematic lines as opposed to being presented as three distinct case studies. This was beneficial for the thesis as it focused the attention on the theoretical insights that the subjectivity-discourse thesis can provide into the national self. This is not to say that a more focused exploration of regional differences wouldn't have contributed insights into the Welsh national context. The *national* context took centre stage in the interviews as it was the ultimate concern of the thesis. However, the relationship between local, regional and national identities or subjectivities is an area that can be investigated further. The theoretical framework developed by this thesis could be applied in a more multi-level empirical investigation

with a greater focus on the local, regional, sub-state national and nation-state levels, and how these interact and inter-relate in the individuals' subjectivity.

Another matter that arose is the limited amount of material in the collected data which related to Wales' position as a sub-state nation. While the theoretical framework developed in this thesis is generalizable to a range of national contexts, from nation-states to sub-state nations, it was hoped that selecting Wales as the case study would provide a richer context for investigation because of the plurality of identities, and the relationship and interplay between sub-state and nation-state national identities. It was intended that studying the layers of complexity that this plurality delivers would enable a deeper investigation of a nuanced and complex national milieu.

However, as it transpired, only a very limited amount of the data collected with the research participants dealt with either the matter of the difference between the sub-state nation and the nation-state, or the multi-layered relationship between Wales and the United Kingdom. The relevant material on this topic that did emerge relates to how the nation-state and the sub-state nation are differently articulated. This was laid out in Chapter Four where participants were described to have expressed Britain and Britishness as an open all-encompassing "identity". Whereas claiming sub-state national identities was problematic for these participants because they lacked what they perceived to be necessary ethnic or cultural identity markers, Britishness was implicitly articulated as a more civic container entity, which sits above or alongside sub-state identities. It had none of the ethnic connotations expressed when sub-state national identities were sometimes talked about. These, however, were the only meaningful statements made which related to this relationship between the nation-state and the sub-state nation. A comparative analysis of sub-state and nation-state national subjectivities may in future be able to further uncover the relationship between different layers and concepts of the nation. Because of the focus of the research and the case-study chosen, the insights gained relate very much to the nation understood in cultural, linguistic and ethnic terms, and so further analysis of national subjectivity in a nation-state would be a fruitful avenue for future research.

National Subjectivity and National Identity

This thesis was driven in part by the need for a stronger and more nuanced concept than "national identity." A number of authors have taken issue with the notion of identity and national identity in particular, with some noting how the notion of identity refers to a number of process and elements, and is therefore too broad and imprecise a concept to be useful (Malešević, 2006: 36; Billig, 2014: 60). Having examined the insights into the national self that the subjectivity-discourse approach has been able to provide, the first research sub-question can be returned to. That is: To what extent can the concepts of subjectivity and discourse provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the national self that "national identity"?

Due to the theoretical approach taken to the issue of the national self, and the advantages that such an approach confers in conceptualising and explaining the notion of the self, the subjectivity-discourse approach has been able to avoid the problematic connotations of fixity, permanency, essentialism, and latency of the notion of "identity." The subjectivity-discourse approach begins from the position that a coherent identity is a fantasy. It rejects the popular narrative of a stable and secure self, and taking into account the fluidity, inconsistency, multiplicity and messiness of the self, focuses on the processes by which an individual becomes a subject, temporarily, through their interaction with social meanings.

The subjectivity-discourse framework situated national identity as the result of an act in which the individual labels themselves, and fixes themselves (temporarily) into an identifiable social category. It was argued that it was best to understand this concept in a limited capacity. It was not discarded entirely, as most people would describe their nationhood using this language. When people claim a national identity, they are telling the analyst *something* about their national self. A national identity, then, is a label with which people choose to identify, and a position they choose to occupy.

However, in attempting to examine the national self in more depth, this concept has too many essentialist connotations, and invokes too superficial and imprecise a meaning. For example, how does the individual interpret the "nation" with which

they identify? The sheer variety of different people and groups who can identify with the same nation raises questions about how the "national" in "national identity" is interpreted. Also, claiming an identity is not a neutral process, and identifying with some version of the nation, or some version of a national identity, has unexplored ethical and practical implications, in that a particular discursive conceptualisation of the nation and the national self is invoked and reinforced.

What the subjectivity-discourse approach has developed is an explanatory framework for exploring in detail what it means for an individual to become and be a national subject. Claiming a national identity is seen as the tip of an iceberg. The framework sought to explore the nature of the "national" part of one's life. The framework, it has been demonstrated, by conceptualising the national self as it does, takes into account the complex and creative operations by which an individual constructs their *own* understanding of various national constructs, and therefore how individuals constitute their national context and their national subjectivity. Unlike national identity, the emphasis rests upon the individual's own operations and agency in forming their understanding of their own national existence. It begins from the belief that a subjectivity is a mediation, interpretation and temporary constitution of discursive meaning. The framework provides insights into the nature of a national subjectivity, in that it is a fleeting and contextual subject position, and that as a result, the need to continually reproduce one's national subjectivity means that different national and ethical positions can be occupied at different times in different contexts. This rejects any notion of latency or essentialism, and situates the national subject as a continually reproduced and re-negotiated aspect of the self. The framework also examines the underexplored ethical dimensions of being a national subject, in that constructing a national self in relation to one's discursive landscape means negotiating with the ethical and normative stances and positions conferred by discourse. A national self is understood as more than simply a label; it is an entry into discursive schemata which shape the way the individual interprets how the world 'is' and how it 'ought' to be.

This subjectivity-discourse approach, then, situates the national self within an approach and theoretical tradition which reject the essentialising connotations of "national identity." In doing so, it provides a more nuanced and comprehensive

account of the individual, internal and personal process of becoming and existing as a national subject. The remainder of this section will revisit in detail the insights into the national self that the analysis of the empirical data using the subjectivity-discourse approach has been able to provide.

Insights into the Formation and Nature of the National Subject

In answer to the second research sub-question (what insights can a subjectivity-discourse approach provide into how the national self is formed, maintained, lived and experienced?), this thesis argues that the theoretical framework contributes a more nuanced theoretical understanding of how the individual becomes a national subject, how the individual experiences their national subjectivity, and exists as a national subject. Having conducted a detailed analysis of the collected empirical data, conclusions can be drawn as to the insights that the subjectivity-discourse approach has been able to make into these aspects of the national self.

The Discursive Production of the Nation

The theoretical framework, in seeking to better explain the national self, has provided certain insights into how the individual constructs not only their own national subjectivity but also their national context. Firstly, then, considering the openness of discursive constructs, how are they populated with meaning? The collected interview data enabled an investigation of how participants give meaning to, and therefore produce, their understanding of various national constructs. Signifiers such as the nation are empty and broad surfaces of inscription, which in this instance enabled participants to articulate the signifiers in a variety of ways, allowing a concept such as Wales to be articulated through a variety of meanings, and often through imprecise stereotypes. As these concepts are so open, certain discursive operations are necessary to 'populate' them. These included the 'framing' of mundane everyday phenomena as specifically national phenomena, and the invoking of a 'constitutive exterior' or 'other' in producing meaning for a construct such as Wales of England

(Laclau, 1990: 17; Howarth, 2004: 266). Framing enables the population of a signifier with meaning, as the nation can be defined by selecting various characteristics, cultural elements and phenomena and articulating them as 'national' phenomena. Common characteristics found elsewhere beyond the nation's borders can be painted as 'Welsh' or 'English' characteristics. Furthermore, these characteristics or phenomena, such as friendliness, community values, and laidback-ness were articulated as 'Welsh' through drawing contradictions with an 'other', often England.

Secondly, what are the consequences of the emptiness of various national constructs? Due to the openness of the signifier, and the impossibility of "closing" the meaning of a concept such as Wales, there is significant agency available to the individual in how they choose to reproduce, understand and articulate these national constructs. The subjectivity-discourse approach, through emphasising the impossibility of closure for a discourse, and the need to continually reiterate and reproduce discursive meanings, situates the national subject as having a significant degree of freedom over how they negotiate with discursive meaning and make sense of their national context. A further consequence of the openness and emptiness of discourse is, as Bowman argues, that its imprecision and nebulousness makes it 'open to appropriation', and it can be simultaneously many things to different people (Bowman, 1994: 144). What this openness suggests is that the hegemony of the nation as a concept is maintained by this emptiness and its easy appropriation (Bowman, 1994: 144). Certainly, the vagueness of the descriptions of the Welsh nation in particular by the participants demonstrates the ease with which multiple and even competing discourses of the nation could be articulated alongside one another. For example, in Chapter Six, it was described how Welshness was understood through two competing and antagonistic discourses – one which privileged the Welsh language, and one which carefully downplayed its centrality or significance.

Finally however, the analysis of the interview data also demonstrated that the discursive "openness" of a national construct has limits, and that certain events, in this case the Brexit referendum, can challenge, narrow and limit certain discursive articulations through which the nation can be understood, and can call into question how individuals understand their own national subjectivities. This finding provides

valuable insight into how the nation is discursively produced; it demonstrates that the openness and emptiness of a nodal point has conditions and limitations, and that certain discursive meanings can be challenged. In this instance the Brexit referendum result disrupted the perceptions of some participants of Britain as progressive, tolerant and multicultural, and the event temporarily fixed the United Kingdom as racist and xenophobic in the eyes of the participants. The effect upon their national subjectivities was that the national construct that they identified with and internalised was suddenly called into question, and their identification with "Britain" suddenly became problematic.

The theoretical framework, then, in seeking to better explain the national self, has demonstrated certain claims about how the individual constructs not only their own national subjectivity but also their national context. The theoretical framework outlined the discursive operations and processes through which individuals construct and understand various national constructs. It asserted that national constructs are *empty signifiers* (Torfing, 1999: 98-99). Approaching the nation from this standpoint, and through examining the empirical data collected, this thesis was able to demonstrate how various empty national constructs are populated with meaning, and how as a consequence of the emptiness of various national constructs, the participants were able to articulate the nation in fairly diverse and un-specific ways that exemplify this emptiness. Interestingly, the analysis of the data also uncovered the *limits* of the emptiness and openness of national constructs, providing valuable insight into the discursive nature of national subjectivity.

National Subjectivities: The Role of the Welsh Language in Welshness

Through looking at how Welshness and the Welsh language were discursively produced, understood, and related to by the participants, this thesis has been able to provide insights into how a national subjectivity such as Welshness is conceptualised, and importantly, how individuals can conceptualise it differently depending on context. To reiterate, the analysis of how the participants related to the Welsh language and Welshness was broken down into three observations: firstly, how did

the participants understand the Welsh language in relation to the Welsh nation?; secondly, what role did the Welsh language play in the participants' own national subjectivities?; and finally, what does the invocation of contradictory notions of Welshness and the Welsh language tell the analyst about the contextual nature of the national subject?

Firstly, the Welsh language played a significant role in participants' articulations of the Welsh nation. There was some regional variation, as some participants in Cardiff associated the language with the north and west, and in articulating the role of the language in their own local context, drew a connection between Welsh-speaking and particular class and professional roles. A common issue that arose, however, was the implication that Welsh speakers were more Welsh than non-Welsh speakers. The discourse of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking was implicitly and explicitly referred to and engaged with by a great many participants. This discourse is contentious as it denies the Welshness of those who do not speak the language. Great care was taken by many participants to avoid the implication that Welsh language ability was a stronger or higher claim to Welshness, with the vast majority rejecting and challenging this implication, though a small number explicitly or implicitly invoked this discourse without challenging its implications. The frequency with which this discourse was engaged and negotiated with points to the potentially problematic role that the Welsh language can play in notions of Welshness. Despite the reframing of the language by elites in Wales as something belonging to everyone, the discourse of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking has the potential to be exclusionary, as the participants were very much aware.

Secondly, in analysing the role the Welsh language played in participants' own national subjectivities, it was found that there was significant difference in how the language was negotiated with between those originally from Wales, and those who had moved to Wales from elsewhere. It played different roles in their national subjectivities. For those originally from Wales, it often strengthened or validated their sense of Welshness, despite their frequent rejection of the implication that the language was a higher claim to Welshness. For those participants who had moved to Wales from elsewhere, the language could act as a vehicle to claim a Welsh "identity,"

a tangible manifestation of their belonging. There were some, however, for whom learning the language had little effect on their *national* self-understanding, and for a small number of participants, the language conferred a distinct linguistic self-understanding as a Welsh-language learner, in which their relationship to the Welsh-speaking community was described though the language of us-and-them. What this final point demonstrates is that these is agency in how people can frame an object such as the Welsh language; to articulate it through a national lens it but one way of constituting it. As was observed, the language can confer an "identity" and can have a meaning which ignores the nation as a referent.

The subjectivity-discourse approach, by emphasising the unfixity and openness of discourse and subjectivities, takes the position that people will have different meanings for Welshness and the Welsh language, and will make sense of it and its role in the Welsh nation differently in different contexts. The existence of strong patterns in the data, such as the tendency for most Welsh learners from Wales to feel that their Welshness has been strengthened by the language, demonstrates the prevalence of certain discursive understandings of Welshness – in this case, Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking. Additionally, the overwhelming rejection of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking demonstrates critical engagement with this discourse, and an invocation of something akin to a civic, inclusive and multicultural understanding of Wales and Welshness. This contradiction speaks to the potential for people to invoke different discursive understandings at different times. In this instance, when talking about their own experiences of learning Welsh, many participants stated that they felt more Welsh, demonstrating a certain conceptualisation of Welshness with a privileged position for the Welsh language, and when talking about how they perceive others, or when speaking in abstract or hypotheticals, they invoked a more civic and inclusive discourse of Welshness, and carefully rejected a necessary connection between Welshness and the Welsh language. The subjectivity-discourse approach accounts for such contradictions as it emphasises that discursive meaning is unfixed, and that subjects are continually producing and remaking themselves depending on context.

Furthermore, the subjectivity-discourse approach can explain the contradictory position that participants took on the relationship between Welshness and the Welsh

language in *ethical* terms. Despite their own personal experiences relating to Welshness and the Welsh language, the participants in question, through expressing the opinions that they did about civic Welshness, positioned themselves in line with more inclusive values, in which claims to Welshness could take many forms, and one not reliant on linguistic ability. Thus many participants expressed awareness of the problematic nature of the discourse of Welshness-as Welsh-speaking, and chose a less morally problematic conceptualisation of the Welsh nation.

Therefore, the principle observation that came out of the exploration of this specific theme is that Welshness was articulated differently, through subtly different discursive meanings, depending on the context of the statement. How participants conceptualised their own Welshness was different to how they conceptualised Welshness in abstract. The key difference was that the Welsh language was often central to their own claim to Welshness, while their articulations of Welshness in abstract had a less primary role for the language. It was argued that participants were less keen to define Welshness in abstract in relation to the Welsh language because of the ethical implications of such a statement; such statements potentially deny the Welshness of those who do not speak the language, and challenge the relatively prominent notion of civic Welshness which has gained popularity in recent years. Such an observation into the nature of the national self enables conclusions to be drawn: it demonstrates the openness of the notion of Welshness and the discursive meanings through which it can be articulated; it exemplifies the fleeting and shifting nature of national subjectivities; it demonstrates antagonistically poised discourses competing for hegemony; the degree of agency available to participants in how they invoked different discourses of Welshness in different context; its contextual nature, and potentially inconsistent and even contradictory discourses that can be expressed; and finally, this observation enables a glimpse of the ethical implications of discourse, in that participants' articulation of Welshness was sometimes influenced by the ethical implications of certain discourses.

Contextual and Fleeting Subjectivities

The subjectivity-discourse framework contributes to research that highlights the contextual and temporally specific nature of the national self. It emphasised the unfixed, changeable and continually reiterated nature of discourse and subjectivities, which rejects the notion of a constant and latent "identity." The thesis therefore explained the fleeting and contextual nature of the national subject using a theoretical understanding of discourse and subjectivity which explains how and why this is the case. In supporting this conceptualisation of discourse, the thesis sought to examine the contexts in which the participants encountered and invoked their national selves, and also the situations in which participants themselves invoked a national frame.

A range of contexts emerged from the data in which participants encountered their national selves, such as form-filling, political events, being abroad, and especially rugby and football games and tournaments. The day-to-day salience of the national self was shown in the data to be relatively low, and contextual nature of the national subjectivities of the participants was particularly evident. Thus it was often in relation to events and particular contexts that participants found themselves considering, expressing and experiencing their national selves. In order to avoid the implication that national subjects are only jarred into existence by external stimuli, the invocation of national frames by participants in decisions and choices was looked at. National subjectivities are not necessarily always imminent, but the nation as a frame and logic can be deployed by individuals to make sense of the world around them. What was demonstrated was that some participants expressed certain decisions through national frames, in which national considerations and ethical positions were expressed as the logic behind the decision. These included more mundane and everyday decisions such as buying Welsh produce and products, as well as significant and long-term decisions such as sending their children to Welsh medium education, and learning Welsh.

Studying the context-specific aspect of the national self is vital to understanding its nature. The subjectivity-discourse approach rejects the notion of a latent "identity," and instead situates national subjectivity as a subject position which is reproduced and temporarily occupied depending on context. Indeed the unfixity of discourse and

the subject means that the individual must continually re-constitute their subjectivities (Smith, 1998: 76). Individuals encounter and engage with their national subjectivities in various contexts, and can make sense of the social world around them through a national frame. The importance of this is that it demonstrates that individuals can occupy multiple positions or invoke multiple frames depending on the context in which they are reproducing their subjectivities, and also, it reframes the subject as having some agency in how they choose to interpret phenomena and make sense of the social world around them. Therefore, the analysis of this dimension of the national self has been able to demonstrate and support its conceptualisation as contextual and fleeting in nature, and the subjectivity-discourse framework has, through its positing of discourse and the subject as unfixed and open, enabled this contextual and fleeting nature to be explained.

Insights into the Normative and Ethical Dimensions of National Subjectivity

In answer to the third research sub-question (to what extent can the subjectivity-discourse approach uncover the ethical and normative dimensions and implications of the national self?), the thesis has, through an analysis of the empirical data, investigated how the nation and national considerations have been reflected in the participants' ethical statements, and how their normative understandings of nationality have been discursively shaped. Conclusions can be drawn, then, as to the extent to which the participants' sense of how the world is and how it ought to be has been shaped by "national" discourses and subjectivities.

Discourses, Norms and Rules of Nationality

This thesis has been able to demonstrate that how participants understand, evaluate and judge nationality (their own and that of others) is shaped various discursive norms and rules. This part of the research was concerned with the final research sub-question (To what extent can the subjectivity-discourse approach uncover the ethical

and normative dimensions and implications of the national self?), in that it investigated the normative dimensions of national subjectivity. The theoretical framework stipulated that in entering into structures of meaning and discourse, individuals also enter into normative structures that can shape their perception of how the world 'is'. However, in articulating their understanding of nationality, participants are making normative claims which reinforce certain discursive meanings, and which legitimize certain truths, and ethical and moral standards and positions. Chapter Five sought to examine what discursive norms or rules structure the participants' understanding of nationality, and in order to get at the participants' negotiation with normative structures and informal rules, what was examined was the extent to which the participants feel that it is possible to change nationalities. The participants' understanding of what constitutes and defines a nationality depended on what identity markers – such as birthplace, accent, place of upbringing, ancestry and language spoken – they decided were important. The relative importance of various identity markers are determined by the discourses through which they understand and articulate nationality: for example, those who felt that it was possible to change nationality invoked a discourse of nationality in which choice was paramount, and so birthplace and ancestry were secondary to the ability to claim affinity with a new nationality. Conversely, some participants expressed a more fixed understanding of nationality, in which factors such as birthplace and ancestry played a more prominent role.

It was found, then, that there was a range of different positions on the question of the possibility of changing nationality. Most held flexible views on this theme, privileging choice and flexibility in their expression of nationality, with some drawing on personal experiences of adopting a new national identity, and some expressing choice as a general ethical principle. People expressing these opinions were often taking a particular ethical stance in that their open and inclusive notion of nationality rejected other discourses of nationality as fixed. They invoked a more civic understanding of nationality. Their articulation of nationality, in making the point that nationality is related to choice, expressed a certain normative position which was coloured by their ethical viewpoint on how nationality 'should' be.

It was only a limited number of people who expressed fixed views on this theme, whose understanding of the nation and nationality manifested as a "strict" internalisation of the norm of nationality as fixed. The positions on the fixity of national identity were not always particularly clear-cut, however, as sometimes participants who believed in the possibility of changing nationality still made reference to the importance of fixed markers of identity, such as birthplace. Therefore, while many participants were able to invoke an understanding of nationality which privileged choice and less "fixed" identity markers, certain norms or rules of hegemonic discourses of nationality are sometimes still implicitly adhered to. Ultimately, it could be understood that while many participants expressed nationality-as-flexible as an ethical position which challenges potentially exclusive notions of nationality, they sometimes nonetheless invoked more fixed norms.

What the analysis of the participants' understanding of nationality demonstrated, then, was that how they understood their national selves and the nation was normative: they expressed ideas and opinions, and these expressions of how the world 'is' draw on, in this case, competing conceptualisations of nationality with different implicit and informal rules. It was stipulated in the framework that normative statements as to how the world 'is' perpetuate and legitimize the power relations that establish such norms, and reproduce the moral and ethical standards and positions that such norms confer. In articulating nationality as they did, participants invoked different discourses which not only attached importance to different identity markers, but which also conferred moral rightness to their particular articulation of nationality. For example, civic notions of nationality emphasise personal choice and reject more "ethnic" markers of identity, yet more fixed understandings of nationality were also expressed which problematised the notion of changing national "identity." Both positions invoke ethical ideas of right and wrong, good and bad. Therefore, the individual, in forming an understanding of the nation, their national context and their national selves, is legitimising, invoking, or even rejecting certain contingent discursive meanings and the ethical norms that such meanings confer.

The National Subject as an Ethical Subject

This subjectivity-discourse approach takes the view that subjectivities are inherently ethical, and that subject positions are not simply neutral labels that are occupied and identified with. Negotiating with discourse and subject positions also involves a negotiation with ethical worldviews and positions. By navigating discourse, individuals aren't simply constructing the meaning through which they interpret the social world, but also the ethical and normative stances through which they evaluate social phenomena. This can have a significant impact on how individuals conduct themselves. The subjectivity-discourse framework stipulates that conducts, behaviours and choices can be shaped by the discursive norms and ethical codes which subjects negotiate with in their self-formation. A significant aspect of the national subject that this thesis explores was how the nation figures in an individual's values and ethics. Drawing out the ethical dimensions of the national subject is integral to comprehensively examining the nature of the national self, as it explores how the subject's interaction with national discourses, and their constitution as a national subject, shapes their moral positioning and can impact their social existence. An objective of this thesis, then, was to assess the extent to which national considerations and national discourses shaped the participants' values and ethical outlook. In exploring this aspect of the national self, having analysed the data, this thesis has demonstrated that national discourses and subjectivities do have an influence on people's ethical existence.

It was possible to identify three broadly coherent discourses which shaped the participants' ethical positioning. Firstly, some participants expressed values based on cosmopolitan discourses, which rejected the nation and nationality as important, or framed it as an impediment to cosmopolitan ideals. Secondly, most participants expressed values associated with an inclusive and tolerant "nationalism," a kind of civic nationalism, in which the nation and national culture was to be celebrated, but liberal values of tolerance and respect for others were privileged. These participants sometimes invoked a third discourse which was a chauvinistic and exclusive notion of nationalism, though this was articulated negatively, and was universally rejected as racist and xenophobic. These participants often contrasted their own "nationalism"

against this kind of ideology, emphasising the liberal and civic national values with which they identified. What this demonstrated was that for these participants, national considerations did shape their ethical positions, but it was a particular discourse of nationalism or the nation which couched it in certain liberal ideals, resembling the discourse of civic nationalism that has become prominent in Welsh public life. But subjects choose and internalised the discourses which most fit with their outlook in that moment, and which reflect the context, such that a liberal civic notion of the nation, and the ethical implications and ideals of such a discourse, is what they choose to express at that time. It must be acknowledged that in the context of an interview, both individual and group interviews, the values expressed will reflect how the participant chooses to present themselves and their opinions in that context.

The extent to which national considerations shape the participants' ethical outlook was also examined in their reflections on how people should relate to the Welsh language. Interestingly, when reflecting on the question of how people *should* relate to the Welsh language, the notion of responsibility and obligation to the *national* context was only mentioned by a relatively small number of participants. Instead many participants expressed their own decision to learn Welsh as motivated by a sense of obligation to their community or local area. Their decision to learn Welsh, then, when articulated as a sense of obligation, courtesy or responsibility, was framed in local rather than national terms. When asked about how others moving to Wales should relate to the language, there was a reluctance to negatively judge those who didn't engage with the language, with many participants recognising the personal circumstances that might preclude learning the language, or stating that people could contribute to the nation in other ways. What this demonstrates is a privileging of the individual's right to choose rather than the notion of an obligation or responsibility to learn Welsh, which once again demonstrates a particular ethical position on the question of learning Welsh.

Returning to the research sub-question, (to what extent can the subjectivity-discourse approach uncover the ethical and normative dimensions and implications of the national self?) what answer can be given? National considerations did play a role in

the participants' general ethical outlook, but there was flexibility in how participants could invoke different discursive logics to make sense of certain issues. Some issues or questions of right or wrong, such as the decision to learning Welsh upon moving to Wales, were mediated through specifically local frames, such that a sense of obligation, propriety or responsibility to the nation was only referred to by a limited number of participants. Most participants expressed opinions in line with a broadly liberal and civic understandings of the nation and nationalism, such that their ethical positions on good or bad conduct, and social expectations for national conduct privileged liberal values, but also placed some importance on respecting and appreciating national culture and the Welsh language, so long as this was within a civic framework. Therefore, it can be claimed that national considerations shaped some participants' ethical outlook on issues. Their positions on key questions mostly involved negotiation with broadly civic and inclusive conceptualisations of nationalism which problematised "nationalism" as xenophobic, closed and chauvinistic, and demonstrated that their ethical positioning derived from their particular understanding of their national context, and their national selves.

Contributions

Theoretical Contributions

The thesis makes theoretical contributions in two respects. Firstly, it makes a theoretical contribution to the study of the nation and the national self – that is, those aspects of social life that are shaped, articulated and experienced in relation to "the national" – through its examination of these using certain poststructuralist theories and principles. It therefore speaks to the rich and varied body of literature which theorises the nation, nationalism and "national identity." The thesis contributes a theoretical approach for studying the national self which draws on theories which, through their sophisticated understanding of discourse and the subject, delve deep into the processes and operations through which individuals are formed as subjects of knowledge and truth, and inquire into the nature of a national subjectivity. Through

this understanding of discourse and the subject, it explains how and through what processes the nation is negotiated with and reproduced, and how the negotiation with "national" discursive constructs shapes individuals' own national subjectivities.

Furthermore, the focus on the ethical implications of national subjectivities seeks to examine how being a national subject, and having a "national" self, is more than simply neutrally adopting or identifying with a label: becoming a national subject, and negotiating with notions of the nation in one's life, involves entry into normative and ethical power structures. This aspect of this thesis sought to contribute an understanding of how national subjectivities can shape outlooks, values, social expectations and conduct, and so examines the extent to which the national subjectivities of the participants shapes their ethical selves. This approach therefore provides an approach and tools to account for the inconsistencies and complexities of the national self, and provides the theoretical understanding to explain the process and operations involved in becoming a national subject.

Moreover, this thesis has contributed to this literature through challenging the hegemonic notion of "identity". Seeking to address this problematic notion of "identity," the thesis relegated the problematic notion of identity to a specific sub-stratum of a wider conceptual framework. This subjectivity-discourse approach takes the conceptual and theoretical weight off the notion of identity, instead employing a subjectivity-discourse approach which enables a more nuanced conceptualisation of the national self as a national subjectivity.

Secondly, this thesis makes a contribution to Foucauldian and Discourse Theory literatures, in that it applies their theoretical insights to the context of the nation. It adds to the small body of literature that has applied Discourse Theory to the nation and nationalism[1]. The detailed analysis of *how* – and through what processes – discourse operates in the construction of national discourses and the formation of the national subject has drawn significantly upon a notion of discourse derived from Discourse Theory. The thesis has further demonstrated, then, how this theoretical approach can be used in the study of various aspects of the nation and of the national

[1] This includes Salecl (1994), Bowman (1994), Torfing (1999) and Sutherland (2005).

self, and how it can provide a detailed analysis and explanation of how an individual becomes and exists as a national subject.

Furthermore, the analysis of the ethical dimension of the national subject has drawn on Foucault's work on ethics and the subject, and has therefore expanded this insightful theory into the study of the national self and the *national* subject, which has been overlooked and underdeveloped. Governmentality studies, for example, has been accused of overlooking the nation and national subjectivity in favour of newer more global and community-based subject positions (Dean, 2007: 106). This literature uses Foucault's work to investigate the subject's regulation by governmental power, and the conducting of conduct in part through targeting people's ethical or moral self-fashioning (Hamann, 2009: 38). This thesis, through its exploration of the ethical dimensions of the national subject, has contributed to the argument that *national* subjectivity continues to be an important dimension of the self that is subject to normalising and moralising or ethical power. This suggests a potential avenue for further research. An investigation of the extent to which the national subject and its ethical subjectivity can be considered to be the target of governmental power may shed more light on how the ethical existence of the national subject relates to the exercise of regulatory power throughout society. This would involve further situating the national subject within governmentality theory, and archaeologically and genealogically tracing how this subjectivity became problematised and made the target of regulation and governmentalisation (Foucault in Howarth, 2005: 318).

Empirical Contribution

This thesis makes an empirical contribution to the literature on the Welsh nation and national "identities." Much has been written, especially since devolution, about Welsh national identities, and about notions of Wales and Welshness. Added to older work which studied the fractures, flux, insecurities and divisions of the Welsh nation (Smith, 1984; Williams, 1982; Williams, 1985), studies of Wales, Welshness and Welsh national identities since devolution have been researching a newer and more confident period in the Welsh nation's existence. The attention paid to notions of

civic Wales and to the National Assembly for Wales as a symbolic as well as a governmental body exemplifies this.

This thesis has contributed to the literature on contemporary Wales and Welshness by empirically investigating how various notions of Wales and Welshness were received, understood and articulated by research participants. It therefore provided a study of the Welsh nation that has analysed how people understand their contemporary national context, and some of the ways that the nation has been discursively constructed and understood. The field work has examined how participants invoked certain notions of Welshness, and how they relate to them; endorsing, internalising or rejecting certain discourses. It demonstrated how traditional conceptualisations of Welshness, such as the notion of Welshness-as-Welsh speaking, are still drawn on, and remain implicitly significant, but also that more civic, inclusive and multicultural notions of Welshness are particularly prominent in how the participants articulated an ideal or even ethical Welshness.

As well as providing a study of the discourses of Wales and Welshness through which people made sense of their national context, the thesis also contributes to research conducted on the role of the Assembly in Welsh life[2]. An important finding from the analysis of the empirical data is that while there were significant invocations of discourses of civic Welshness, which is a discourse that is enthusiastically promoted by those involved in Welsh civic life, the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government were very rarely referred to. It can be argued that while the Assembly itself was not necessarily recognised as having made a difference nor spoken of as a significant part of the Welsh nation, the notions and values of civic Welshness that this institution reinforces, symbolises and espouses were observable in the empirical data.

Implications for Policy-making

[2] See Scully et al., 2008; Scully, 2013; Scully & Wyn Jones, 2015; and The Electoral Commission, 2003.

Through its focus on Welsh-language learners, this thesis makes an empirical contribution to this fascinating social group at a time when government policies on the growth of the Welsh language are placing an increased importance on the role of adult learners (Welsh Assembly Government, 2017: 41-42). The growth in adult learners is a relatively recent phenomenon, as one of the participants illustrated: 'when I was younger some of the Welsh-speaking Welsh thought of people who learned Welsh as, well nobody understood them … they didn't see the purpose … everyone had grown up with pressure on them to speak English' (C, G2, P4). Welsh learners today play a more prominent role than ever in the Welsh language community, and this group will play a significant part in attempts to grow the number of Welsh speakers, and to reverse language decline in Wales. As one participant stated, 'everyone must understand that learners are now the future of the language' (C, G1, P7).

These empirical findings have several implications for policy-makers and for actors involved in the advocating and promotion of learning Welsh. Firstly, an issue that arose is the fact that some Welsh learners experienced a position of exteriority to the Welsh language community, and described their relationship to it one of us-and-them. Despite being fluent, some participants expressed a feeling of being apart and distinct from the native-speaking Welsh language community. This sentiment, although expressed by a relatively small number of participants, demonstrates that Welsh language ability is no guarantee of a sense of belonging to what can be perceived as the Welsh language community. This demonstrates potential issues for the integration between Welsh language learners and native Welsh speakers, and suggests that some find obstacles in 'crossing the bridge'. This derived partly from the sense that native Welsh speakers were protective of their community, or from having encountered Welsh speakers who were reluctant, for whatever reason, to converse in Welsh. This reinforced what was encountered by Trosset (1986) in ethnographic work on the process of learning Welsh. However, this points to the need to consider this dimension of integration between Welsh learners and native Welsh speakers, and ways of overcoming obstacles to learners feeling a belonging to the community and an

ownership of the language, especially considering how important a role adult learners play in the project of reversing language decline.

Secondly, this thesis inquired into the motivations behind the decisions to learn Welsh. What was found was that for those originally from Wales, their desire to learn Welsh often stemmed from a sense of lack due to their inability to speak Welsh, a desire to complete or fulfil their held notion of Welshness, or a sense that something had been taken or lost from the family in previous generations. Targeting and working with these types of sentiments would potentially benefit attempts to encourage the learning of Welsh, although the potential exists for such sentiments to invoke a notion of Welshness-as-Welsh-speaking, which can clash with a certain civic notion of Welshness in which a Welsh-speaking identity is but one aspect of a wider multi-faceted nation.

Finally, for those who had moved to Wales, their motivation for learning Welsh was frequently described as an obligation, responsibility or courtesy to their *local* context. Work carried out by Mann (2007) found that for those involved in his study, language learning represented an important avenue for their expressions of a civic responsibility towards Wales, but also that distinctly local contexts shaped their decisions, such as the fear of being excluded from their communities, and the encountering of new socio-linguistic norms (2007: 218-219). This thesis supports the importance of the local context for shaping people's decisions to learn Welsh. Participants who had moved to Wales mostly expressed a sense of obligation or courtesy to their local context as a motivation. The thesis therefore found that the *national* context or *national* considerations played a surprisingly small role in the participants' decision to learn Welsh. This suggests efforts to encourage the learning of Welsh would benefit more from being framed as an activity that relates to the community or the local context.

Concluding Remarks

This thesis has argued that a subjectivity-discourse approach provides a more comprehensive, nuanced and sensitive conceptualisation and examination of the national self that is possible through the concept of "national identity." It has demonstrated how approaching the national self through the subjectivity-discourse framework, and using its analytical tools to study national subjectivity, can provide substantial insights into the formation of the national subject and the nature of this subjectivity, and can bring attention to, and account for the overlooked ethical and normative dimensions of a national subjectivity. This thesis has therefore contributed new theoretical approaches to understanding the national self, and has empirically demonstrated its capacity to uncover and explore the processes, operations, implications and nature of the "national" part of one's existence.

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Appendix One

List of interviews and focus groups conducted. Information is included about the date of the interview, its location, the sex of the participants, their age bracket and their nation of origin.

Aberystwyth Interviews

Individual Interviews:

A, P1 – Interviewed 21st of April, 2016 in Aberystwyth. Female, 60s, originally from England.

A, P2 – Interviewed 29th of April, 2016 in Aberystwyth. Female, 40s, originally from England.

A, P3 – Interviewed 1st of June, 2016 in Llanrhystud. Female, 60s, originally from England.

A, P4 – Interviewed 1st of June, 2016 in Aberystwyth. Male, 30s, originally from England.

A, P5 – Interviewed 27th of May, 2016 in Aberystwyth. Female, 70s, originally from Wales.

A, P6 – Interviewed 7th of June, 2016 in Llanon. Female, 40s, originally from Wales.

A, P7 & P8 (joint interview with husband and wife) – Interviewed 10th of June, 2016 in Aberystwyth. P7, Male, 60s, originally from England; P8, Female, 60s, originally from England.

A, P9 – Interviewed 13th of June, 2016 in Aberystwyth. Female, 30s, originally from Germany.

A, P10 – Interviewed 24th of June, 2016 in Llanbadarn Fawr. Female, 60s, originally from Wales.

A, P11 – Interviewed 23rd of September, 2016 in Aberystwyth. Male, 40s, originally from England.

Focus Groups

Participants of Focus Group 1 – Interviewed 16th of May, 2016 in Devil's Bridge.

A, G1, P1 – Male, 60s, originally from England.

A, G1, P2 – Female, 30s, originally from England.

A, G1, P3 – Male, 40s, originally from England.

Participants of Focus Group 2 – Interviewed 27th of June, 2016 in Aberystwyth.

A, G1, P1 – Female, 50s, originally from England.

A, G1, P2 – Female, 50s, originally from Egypt.

A, G1, P3 – Female, 20s, originally from England.

A, G1, P4 – Female, 20s, originally from England.

A, G1, P5 – Female, 50s, originally from England.

A, G1, P6 – Female, 50s, originally from England.

Cardiff Interviews

Individual Interviews

C, P1 – Interviewed – 10th of October, 2016 in Cardiff. Female, 60s, originally from Wales.

C, P2 – Interviewed – 10th of October, 2016 in Cowbridge. Female, 50s, originally from Wales.

C, P3 – Interviewed – 18th of November, 2016 in Cardiff. Female, 60s, originally from England.

Focus Groups

Participants of Focus Group 1 – Interviewed 13th of July, 2016 in Cardiff.

C, G1, P1 – Male, 50s, originally from Wales.

C, G1, P2 – Male, 40s, originally from England Germany.

C, G1, P3 – Female, 50s, originally from England.

C, G1, P4 – Female, 20s, originally from Czech Republic.

C, G1, P5 – Female, 20s, originally from Czech Republic.

C, G1, P6 – Male, 20s, originally from Wales.

C, G1, P7 – Female, 70s, originally from Wales.

Participants of Focus Group 2 – Interviewed 13th of July, 2016 in Cardiff.

C, G2, P1 – Female, 40s, originally from Wales.

C, G2, P2 – Male, 40s, originally from Wales.

C, G2, P3 – Female, 30s, originally from England.

C, G2, P4 – Male, 70s, originally from Wales.

Participants of Focus Group 3 – Interviewed 18th of November, 2016 in Cowbridge.

C, G3, P1 – Female, 40s, originally from Wales.

C, G3, P2 – Female, 70s, originally from Wales.

C, G3, P3 – Female, 60s, originally from Wales.

C, G3, P4 – Female, 40s, originally from Wales.

C, G3, P5 – Female, 60s, originally from Wales,

C, G3, P6 – Female, 60s, originally from Wales.

C, G3, P7 – Female, 70s, originally from Wales.

North Wales Interviews

Individual Interviews

NW, P1 – Interviewed 29th of March, 2017 over Skype from Bangor. Male, 30s, originally from England.

NW, P2 – Interviewed 26th of April, 2017 in Bangor. Male, 60s, originally from England.

NW, P3 – Interviewed 19th of May, 2017 in Nebo, Bangor. Female, 60s, originally from England.

NW, P4 – Interviewed 19th of May, 2017 in Nebo, Bangor. Male, 30s, originally from Wales.

NW, P5 – Interviewed 18th of July, 2017 in Bangor. Female, 50s, originally from England.

NW, P6 – Interviewed, 18th of July, 2017 in Colwyn Bay. Male, 60s, originally from Wales.

Focus Groups

Participants of Focus Group 1 – Interviewed 13th of July, 2017 in Pwllheli.

NW, G1, P1 – Male, 30s, originally from England.

NW, G1, P2 – Female, 50s, originally from England.

NW, G1, P3 – Male, 50s, originally from Wales.

NW, G1, P4 – Female, 60s, originally from Wales.

NW, G1, P5 – Female, 60s, originally from England.

NW, G1, P6 – Male, 70s, originally from Wales.

NW, G1, P7 – Female, 60s, originally from Norway.

NW, G1, P8 – Female, 60s, originally from England.

NW, G1, P9 – Female, 60s, originally from Wales.

NW, G1, P10 – Female, 80s, originally from England.

Focus Group 2 – Interviewed 7th of July, 2016 in Mold. This focus group was a Welsh language summer school class of around 25 people. Individuals could not be clearly identified on the recording nor by notes as there were too many statements from a large number of participants, and the discussion had been too lively for detailed notes to be taken. Instead of identifying individuals, statements used from this focus group are attributed to the group session (noted as NW, G2).

Participants of Focus Group 3 – Interviewed 1st of August, 2017 in Rhosneigr.

NW, G3, P1 – Male, 60s, originally from England.

NW, G3, P2 – Male, 50s, originally from England.

NW, G3, P3 – Female, 40s, originally from England.

NW, G3, P4 – Female, 60s, originally from England.

NW, G3, P5 – Female, 70s, originally from Wales.

Appendix Two

The list of questions used in research interviews is provided below. Not all questions were asked to all participants and focus groups, as the interviews were free to follow the direction of the conversation, but most questions were asked in most sessions. Allowing the conversation to develop naturally led to richer reflections from the participants. Some questions were unsuitable to be asked to all participants. For example, some different questions were posed to those originally from Wales and those from elsewhere.

- What is a nation for you?
- How would you describe your nationality?
- What is it that makes Wales?
- Do you feel Welsh/English/British?
- What is it that makes you feel Welsh/English/British?
- Has your sense of nationality changed since learning Welsh?
- What was it that made you want to learn Welsh?
- Have there been situations where you have felt particularly Welsh/English/British?
- What kind of situations make you aware of your (Welsh identity/ various national identities?)
- Where do you feel you "learned" your nationality from?
- Would you say you feel pride in your nation? And in anything in particular?
- Would you consider the way you feel about your Welshness/Englishness/Britishness to be shared by others in Wales/England/Britain?
- Do you feel an affiliation with others within your nation?
- What is it for you that makes other people Welsh?
- What would it take for you to doubt someone's claim to a nationality?

- How important is birthplace for you with regards to people's national identity?
- How important is the nationality of someone's parents to their national identity?
- What would a person have to do to become Welsh?
- What makes a good member of the nation?
- How important to you is your nation?
- How closely associated is your ability to speak the language to your sense of nationality?
- How important a "Welsh" behaviour is speaking the language?
- To what extent do you think Wales is defined by the language?
- Do you feel you value your languages differently?
- Do you feel a sense of ownership over either of your languages?
- Do you think learning the language of that country is important?
- If someone didn't, how would you perceive them, and how do you think they would be perceived?
- (To individuals not originally from Wales) How long did it take you to feel like you belonged, or if not, what do you think it would take for you to feel like you belonged?